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Legal Description and Land Status

Course Number 2000-ST-1

A SELF STUDY GUIDE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

March 3, 1849

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

PHOENIX
TRAINING
CENTER

BUREAU OF
LAND
MANAGEMENT

A MESSAGE TO THE USER

Considerable effort has been expended in creating the written materials and video tape to make this training package an effective learning tool. It is important that we maintain a record of the usage and effectiveness of this training package. You are the only resource in providing that important information to us. Since we have taken the time to provide a quality product to you -- please take the time to complete the evaluation form contained in the guide and send it to us after you have completed the training.

The Phoenix Training Center (PTC) acknowledges Sandy Dunn, Mike Nelson, Karl Fredberg and those participating in the field test for their review of this training package.

Good Learning!
PTC Staff and Contributing Developers

BLM Library
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~~Tom Morris~~
~~Milwaukee DO~~
~~9/17/87~~

PTC TRAINING
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WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM THIS TRAINING

This self-study guide is intended for use as an introductory or refresher course for anyone who needs to know how to read and write legal descriptions and how and where to locate information about land status.

Its primary benefit is to Resource Specialists, Land Law and other examiners, or any employee whose job requires knowledge of these tools.

HOW TO USE THE SELF-STUDY PACKAGE

The Legal Description and Land Status self-study training package consists of a self-study guide and a video tape.

The package is self-paced. This means that the package has been designed for you to work through at your own pace. Some of you may be able to complete the material in a few hours, others will require a few days or longer. In order for the material to be of the most value to you, you should continue to work through the package once you begin - but you should feel free to take the amount of time appropriate to your own learning style.

The Self-study Guide. The self-study guide contains 3 sections: Overview, Lesson Plan, and Resource Aids.

The Overview Section will help you to understand the goal and objectives of the training package. It also contains some historical information helpful to your understanding of the course material and information about how you may obtain a training certificate. Read through this section before starting the lessons.

The Lesson Plan Section contains 3 lessons. As you work your way through the lessons you will be directed in the use of the video tape. You will also find a column titled "Assistance" on the left side of most pages. The Assistance Column is used to highlight the introduction of new concepts as you work through the lessons and to suggest use of the Resource Aid Section.

The Resource Aid Section contains a wealth of useful material for you to use as you proceed through the lesson. It is expected that you will find the Resource Aids even more valuable once the training is over.

The Video Tape. The video tape contains three video segments: Legal Description, Land Status Records, and Answers to the Final Exercise.

Lesson 1 **begins** with the viewing of the Legal Description video tape. You may view this video as frequently as you need before and during your work in Lesson 1.

Lesson 2 **begins** with the viewing of the Land Status video tape. You may view this video as frequently as you need before and during your work in Lesson 2.

Lesson 3 **ends** with the viewing of the Answers to the Final Exercise video tape. The video for Lesson 3 is an interactive video and must be used in the following manner. Before viewing any part of the video, Answers to the Final Exercise, you must have completed all of the questions in Lesson 3. After you have completed the written exercise, which is Lesson 3, then you are to play the video and follow along as the questions are repeated, answered, and explained.

GOAL

The goal of this self-study training package is to provide BLM employees with the ability to use the rectangular system of cadastral survey, to accurately read and write legal land descriptions and to use the land status records system to accurately determine the ownership and status of any parcel of public land.

After completing the self-study guide, employees will be more aware of the reasons for these records and will be better equipped to use them in the performance of their jobs.

OBJECTIVES

After completing the lessons and questions in this study guide, participants will be able to:

1. use the components of the rectangular system of cadastral survey to legally describe land,
2. describe any area on a map, in writing, using the correct legal description format,
3. when provided with a written legal description, identify the described area on a map or plat,
4. list the six components of the land status records system: Master Title Plat, Use Plats and Supplemental Plats, Historical Index, Control Document Index, and Index to Miscellaneous Documents, and Serial Register Page,
5. list the sources and location of land status records and,
6. use land status records to research and document the current status of any parcel of land.

SURVEYING OUR PUBLIC LANDS -- A BRIEF HISTORY

History...

Land surveying dates back to ancient times. More than one civilization recognized the need for marking the boundaries of land for taxing purposes as well as for defining just where one ownership begins and another ends.

The Egyptians, with their great expertise and accuracy in building pyramids more than 7,000 years ago, must have possessed the techniques and instruments to perform surveys which are comparable in precision to some present day requirements. In fact, the Egyptians were very much involved in property surveys since land boundaries along the Nile River were annually lost from flooding, and resurveys were constantly needed.

Most modern BLM monuments have an inscription which reads "UNLAWFUL TO DISTURB." Such warnings are not at all new. Babylonian boundary stones set about 3500 years ago contain not only geographical information and the surveyor's name, but also numerous curses on anyone daring enough to move the monument!

There were several other notable surveying endeavors in earlier times including the Roman rectangular plots which were laid out with the four-armed groma instrument, William the Conqueror's land surveys of England with their resultant "Domesday Book," and the pyramid, road, city and bridge related surveys of the 11th to 14th century Incas.

In early day America, several types of surveys were performed, utilizing state-of-the-art instruments, and calling principally on mathematicians, astronomers, and navigators to perform as land surveyors. Most of these earlier surveys were of the metes and bounds type, meaning they were established by distances and directions which were not in accordance with a regular pattern. Some prominent surveyor names from that time include Roger Sherman, Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon, David and Benjamin Rittenhouse, Thomas Jefferson, and George Washington.

But, it remained for the late 1700's of colonial America for the beginning of what was to become the most ambitious program of land disposal, ownership recording, and actual on-the-ground boundary marking which has ever occurred. Described as a "marvel of simplicity," the United States rectangular survey system was designed to layout one mile square parcels over all of the Federal lands outside of the original thirteen colonies and their western territories.

A contemplation of the scope of establishing such a minute, legally acceptable, and accurate grid system across a billion and a half acres of the thirty "public land states" is truly an appreciation of the magnitude of effort involved in "Surveying Our Public Lands."

Actual authority for starting the United States rectangular survey system occurred on May 20, 1785, when the Continental Congress approved modified recommendations of a committee chaired by Thomas Jefferson. Actually, the committee's work was the culmination of much thought, debate, and evolvement of earlier survey activities. Two military engineers, Colonel Henry Bouquet and Thomas Hutchins were among the original major contributors. (Hutchins later became the first geographer of the United States.) In any case, the 1785 Land Ordinance laid the legal and technical foundation for the country's public land surveys of almost the past two hundred years.

With Hutchins' personal attention, the first surveys under the ordinance took place in Ohio where the west boundary of Pennsylvania crossed the north boundary of the Ohio River. The first township was surveyed by Absolom Martin of New Jersey in 1786. The State of Ohio was the testing ground for the new type of surveys in that State.

By 1805, the rectangular surveys were started across Indiana. The system's elements had been well settled by then, and the surveys were eventually extended westward to the Pacific Ocean.

The plan developed three new theories in land administration. First, the principle of "survey before settlement"; second, the principle of a mathematically designed plan to be followed throughout the entire area of the public domain; and third, the creation of a standard land unit, the section, of uniform shape and area and with boundaries physically marked on the ground. These features did not follow any plan in use within the area of the original Colonies in America, where land locations were made in irregular form and without any orderly plan.

In 1812, the General Land Office was established by Congress as a bureau of the Treasury Department "to superintend, execute, and perform all such acts respecting the public lands...." Before then, the public domain workload was handled by the Treasury Department, but it was recognized that a more focused land management agency was needed. However, the Surveyor General posts, with responsibility for contracting surveys to private surveyors, remained independent of the GLO.

Edward Tiffin of Ohio was appointed the first commissioner of the GLO. Tiffin's contributions to land surveying were significant in consolidating and organizing land and survey records, and later as a Surveyor General, in designing a plan of correction lines for the solution of the troublesome problem of conforming a rectangular pattern to a round earth.

Another remarkable pioneer surveyor was William Burt who surveyed large areas of land in upper Michigan and Wisconsin in the mid 1800's. Burt, who did not have much of a formal education, was the inventor of the solar compass which used the sun to maintain direction, instead of the magnetic compass. His invention came of necessity from trying to run lines in a region of vast iron deposits which caused deviations of the compass needle.

The exploration and survey of the western lands continued with many verbal and written accounts by curious surveyors of colorful discoveries of the nature of a new land, and tales of hardship, misery and financial loss. One 1852 field note record of an Iowa survey reads, "one of my men was accidentally shot yesterday and died almost instantly." The notes continue with bearings and distances to the stricken Ivy Johnson's grave.

Until 1910, the public land surveys were generally administered by regional Surveyors General who contracted with authorized Deputy Surveyors to perform the work. Sets of instructions to the Deputies were often written by the Surveyor General to specify the method of survey, and the accuracies expected. However, it gradually became evident that a consolidation of officially authorized surveying procedures was needed. An Oregon Manual of Surveying Instructions was published in 1851, and a revision of this Manual was published by GLO in 1855 for national use. Subsequent manuals were issued in 1871, 1881, 1894, 1902, 1930, 1947 (BLM), and 1973 (BLM).

In the land surveying profession, integrity is recognized as one of the most desirable attributes for surveyors. Although the contract system of conducting government surveys had been mostly successful for more than one hundred years; it was proposed that better control over the soundness of individual projects, and greater public responsiveness could be obtained by appointing a corps of directly employed surveyors. Starting from July 1, 1910 until the present, most federal cadastral surveys have been performed by federally employed surveyors.

Growth of the public domain...

In 1803, President Thomas Jefferson arranged to buy a large amount of land from France. This is known as the Louisiana Purchase. It amounted to over 500 million acres and included most of the land from the Mississippi River west to the Rocky Mountains, except what is now the State Of Texas. The Louisiana Purchase cost the United States about $23 million.

Then in 1819 the land that is now Florida became part of the United States. Texas became part of the United States in 1845. A year later the United States signed a treaty with Great Britain which added the area that is now the States of Oregon, Washington and Idaho. This treaty is known as the Oregon Compromise.

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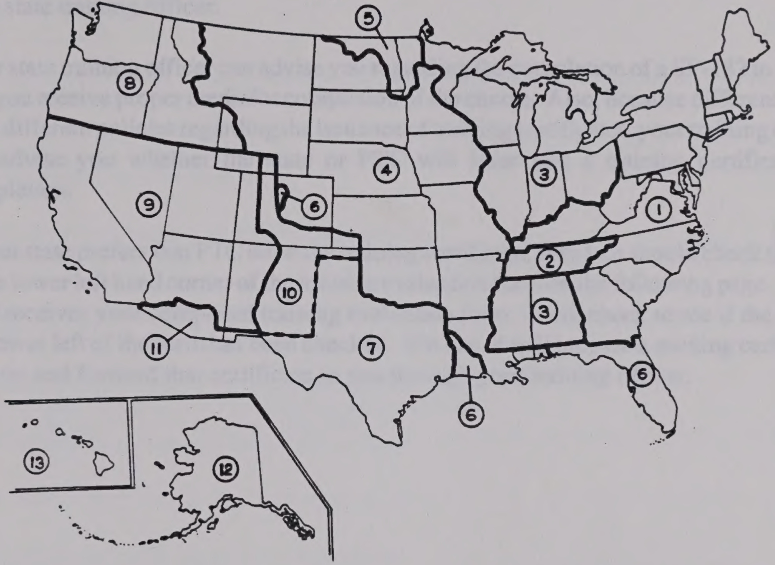
In 1848, just one year before the discovery of gold in California, the United States obtained from Mexico the lands that are now the States of California, Nevada, Utah and parts of Arizona, Wyoming, and Colorado. The Gadsden Purchase in 1853 added what is now southern Arizona.

The last large addition to the land area of the United States came in 1867 when the United States purchased Alaska from Russia. The area of Alaska amounted to over 375 million acres (that is about one-fifth the area of the rest of the United States). It cost about $7 million.

With these additions, the public domain stretched from the west boundary of Pennsylvania to the Pacific Ocean, from the Canadian border to the Gulf of Mexico, and it included Florida and Alaska. Altogether it embraced over 1 billion 800 million acres.

ACQUISITION OF THE TERRITORY OF THE UNITED STATES



1. The Original Thirteen States
2. 1790 North Carolina Cession
3. 1781-1802 State Cessions
4. 1803 Louisiana Purchase
5. 1818 Red River of the North
6. 1819 Treaty with Spain
7. 1845 Annexed Texas
8. 1846 Oregon Compromise
9. 1848 Mexican Cession
10. 1850 Purchased from Texas
11. 1853 Gadsden Purchase
12. 1867 Purchased from Russia
13. 1898 Annexed Hawaii

WORKING WITH THE STATE TRAINING OFFICER

One of the first things you should do when you decide to take this training is to contact your state training officer.

Your state training officer can advise you regarding the completion of a SF-182 to assure that you receive proper credit for completion of the course. Also, because different states have different policies regarding the issuance of training certificates, your training officer can advise you whether the state or PTC will issue you a training certificate on completion.

If your state prefers that PTC issue the training certificate, then you should check the box in the lower left hand corner of the training evaluation form on the following page. When PTC receives your completed training evaluation form, it will check to see if the box in the lower left of the form has been checked. If it has, it will prepare a training certificate for you and forward that certificate to you through your training officer.

TRAINING EVALUATION FORM

Name: ______________________ Date: ______________

Job Title: ______________________

Location: ______________________ Mail Code: ______________

How would you rate the effectiveness of this training package in helping you to achieve the following objectives? Ask yourself, "Do I now have the ability to...."

		Not effective				Effective
1. use the components of the rectangular system of cadastral survey to describe land boundaries?	1.	1	2	3	4	5
2. describe, in writing, any area on a map using correct legal description format?	2.	1	2	3	4	5
3. locate an area on a map or plat when provided a written legal description?	3.	1	2	3	4	5
4. recall and list the six components of the land status records system (Master Title Plat, Use Plats and Supplemental Plats, Historical Index, Control Document Index, Index to Miscellaneous Documents, and Serial Register Page)?	4.	1	2	3	4	5
5. list the sources and the locations of land status records?	5.	1	2	3	4	5
6. use land status records to research and document the current status of any parcel of public land?	6.	1	2	3	4	5

How do you rate the effectiveness of the:

7. Self-study guide	7.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Video tape	8.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Resource aids	9.	1	2	3	4	5

Please feel free to provide any other comments you feel would be helpful to PTC in the eventual revision of this self-study training package. Write your comments on the reverse side of this page. Thank you.

☐ Mark this box if PTC is to provide your training certificate.

Manager's Course Guide Number

2000-ST-1

Be sure to return this form to:

BLM- Phoenix Training Center
Suite 300
5050 North 19th Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85015

Vulcan
BINDER & COVER
Vincent, Al 35178

LESSON 1

LEGAL DESCRIPTION

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES:

After successfully completing this lesson, you will be able:

1. to use the components of the rectangular system of cadastral survey to describe land boundaries,
2. to describe any area on a map in writing using correct legal description format, and
3. when provided a written legal description be able to locate the described area on a map or plat.

Assistance

Study Guide

View the video tape Legal Description.

I. View the Legal Description segment of the video tape. This video tape will provide you with the proper foundation to work through this self-study guide.

View the Legal Description segment of the video tape now.

Good! now that you've viewed the video tape, you are ready to tackle the "hands-on" portion of the training.

Any time you feel lost, either back up a few pages in the workbook, or take a second look at the video tape. That's what's nice about this type of training--**you set the pace** to match your own learning style.

Resource Aid 1 Glossary

One last thing before you begin. You will likely come across a number of new words as you work through the self-study guide. When you come to a new term, see the glossary in the Resource Aids section.

II. The Rectangular System of Surveying

See Resource Aid 2 for more information on the metes and bounds system.

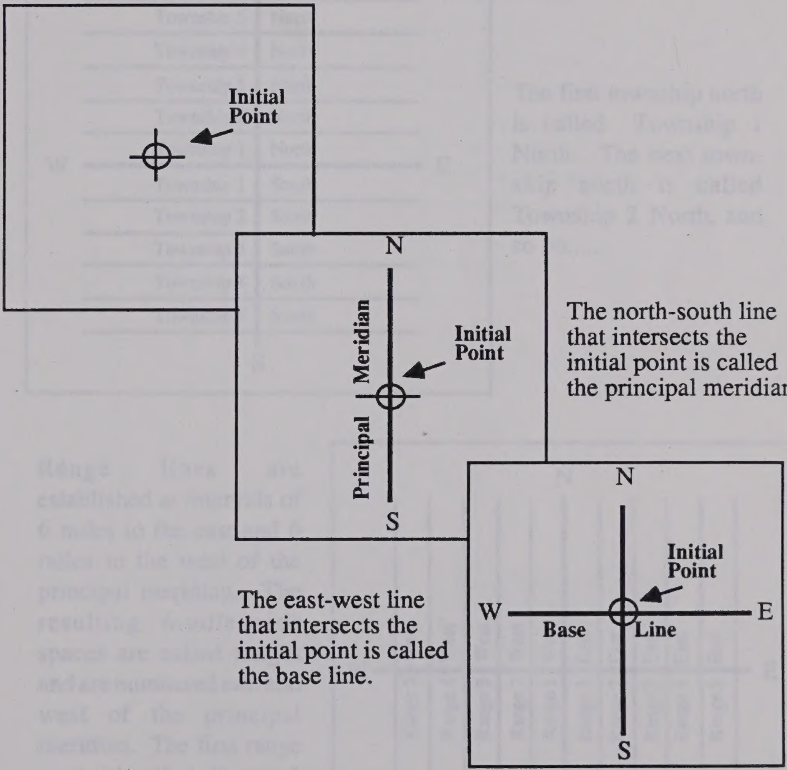
The present system for the surveying of the public lands in the United States was established by law in 1785, under the Articles of Confederation. As a result, all of the states in the Union, except the thirteen original states and Kentucky, Maine, Vermont, West Virginia, Tennessee, and Texas, became subject to the rectangular survey system. At that time, the existing system of "pitches," or "metes and bounds" was the general practice. By comparing the irregular and unreliable metes-and-bounds descriptions used by the original colonies to the streamlined rectangular system now in use, you can clearly see the advantages of the rectangular system.

The structure of the rectangular system of survey is simple. The entire system is built around initial points, 36 of which have been established throughout the United States (includes Alaska).

Initial Point

When entering a new, unsurveyed area, the surveyor would establish an initial point from which to begin the survey.

The surveyor defined the initial point by determining exact latitude and longitude through astronomical observations or through ties to other points of known geographical position. Surveyors then establish a north-south line configured from true north (not magnetic north) extending above and below the initial point and an east-west line parallel to the equator.


Initial Point
N
Principal Meridian
Initial Point
S
N
Initial Point
W
E
Base
Line
S

Principal Meridian

The north-south line that intersects the initial point is called the principal meridian.

Base Line

The east-west line that intersects the initial point is called the base line.

See Resource Aid 3 for a map of Principal Meridians and Base Lines.

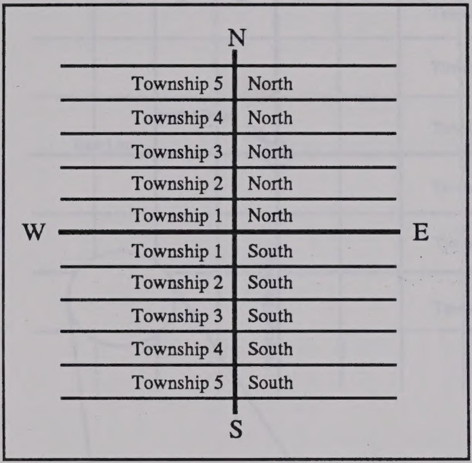
Assistance

Study Guide

Township Lines

Township lines are established at intervals of 6 miles to the north and 6 miles to the south of the base line. The resulting 6-mile wide spaces are called townships and are numbered north and south of the base line.

Remember that the spaces, not the lines, are called townships, and the spaces, not the lines, are numbered.

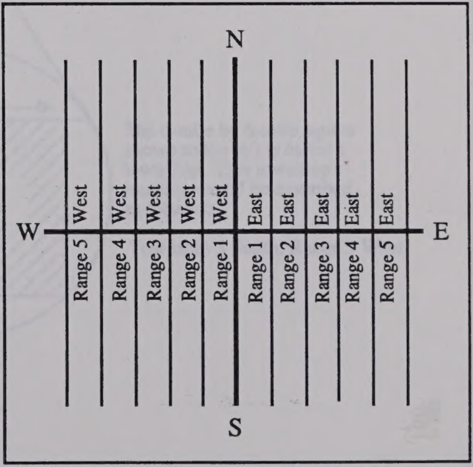

N
Township 5 North
Township 4 North
Township 3 North
Township 2 North
Township 1 North
W
E
Township 1 South
Township 2 South
Township 3 South
Township 4 South
Township 5 South
S

The first township north is called Township 1 North. The next township north is called Township 2 North, and so on.....

Range Lines

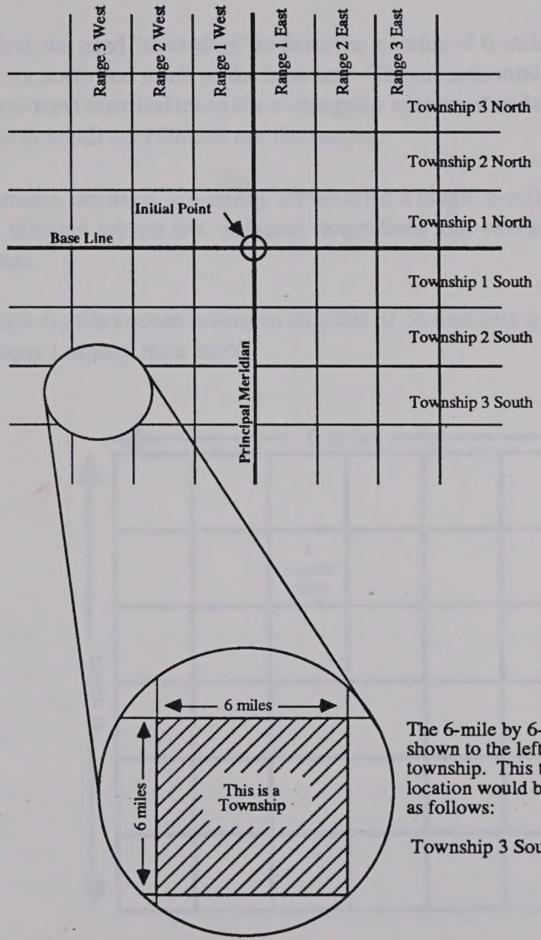
Range lines are established at intervals of 6 miles to the east and 6 miles to the west of the principal meridian. The resulting 6-mile-wide spaces are called ranges and are numbered east and west of the principal meridian. The first range west is called Range 1 West, the next range west is called Range 2 West, and so on.....

Range


N
W
E
S
Range 5 West
Range 4 West
Range 3 West
Range 2 West
Range 1 West
Range 1 East
Range 2 East
Range 3 East
Range 4 East
Range 5 East

Townships

The range lines and the township lines intersect and establish the boundaries for 6-mile by 6-mile squares called townships.


Range 3 West
Range 2 West
Range 1 West
Range 1 East
Range 2 East
Range 3 East
Township 3 North
Township 2 North
Initial Point
Township 1 North
Base Line
Township 1 South
Township 2 South
Principal Meridian
Township 3 South
6 miles
6 miles
This is a Township

The 6-mile by 6-mile square shown to the left is called a township. This township's location would be described as follows:

Township 3 South, Range 3 West

Assistance

Study Guide

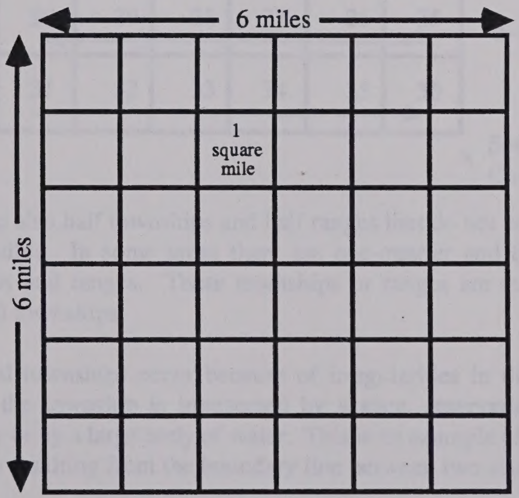
You have probably noted that we have applied two different meanings to the term "township." Because the use of a single term to describe two different situations is potentially confusing, you must understand each meaning and how each is used.

First, we used "township" to describe a series of 6-mile-wide horizontal rows north and south of the base line. These horizontal rows serve as the east-west coordinates in the rectangular system of cadastral survey. The north-south coordinates are the ranges.

Second, we used "township" to describe a single 6-mile square area that is situated within two adjacent range lines and two adjacent township lines.

Sections

Each 6-mile square township consists of 36 sections and each section is about 1 square mile each.

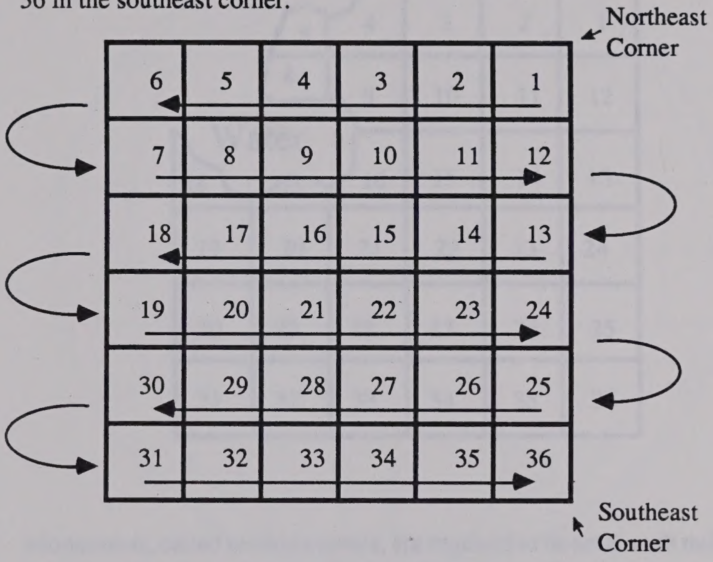


Assistance

Study Guide

Section Numbering

The sections in each township are always numbered consecutively, beginning with number 1 in the northeast corner of the township, and counting westerly six sections; then, with number 7, south of section 6, counting back to the east side of the township, and so on, weaving back and forth through the sections of the township, and ending with number 36 in the southeast corner.

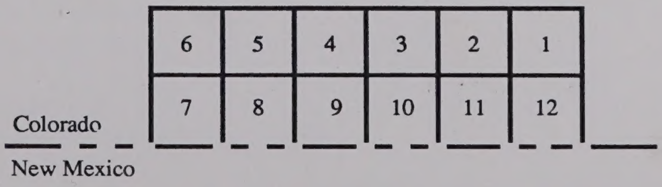


6	5	4	3	2	1
7	8	9	10	11	12
18	17	16	15	14	13
19	20	21	22	23	24
30	29	28	27	26	25
31	32	33	34	35	36

There are also half townships and half ranges that do not contain all 36 square miles. In some areas there are one-quarter and three-quarter townships and ranges. These townships or ranges are referred to as fractional townships.

Fractional Townships

Fractional townships occur because of irregularities in the survey or because the township is intersected by a state, reservation, or grant boundary or by a large body of water. This is an example of a fractional township resulting from the boundary line between two states.



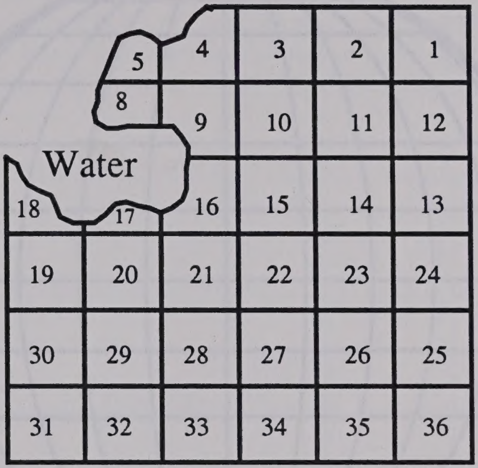
6	5	4	3	2	1
7	8	9	10	11	12

Assistance

Study Guide

Fractional Sections

This is an example of a fractional township resulting from the shoreline of a body of water. The sections of land abutting the body of water (Sections 4, 5, 8, 9, 16, 17 and 18) are called fractional sections.


Water
1
2
3
4
5
8
9
10
11
12
18
17
16
15
14
13
19
20
21
22
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28
27
26
25
31
32
33
34
35
36

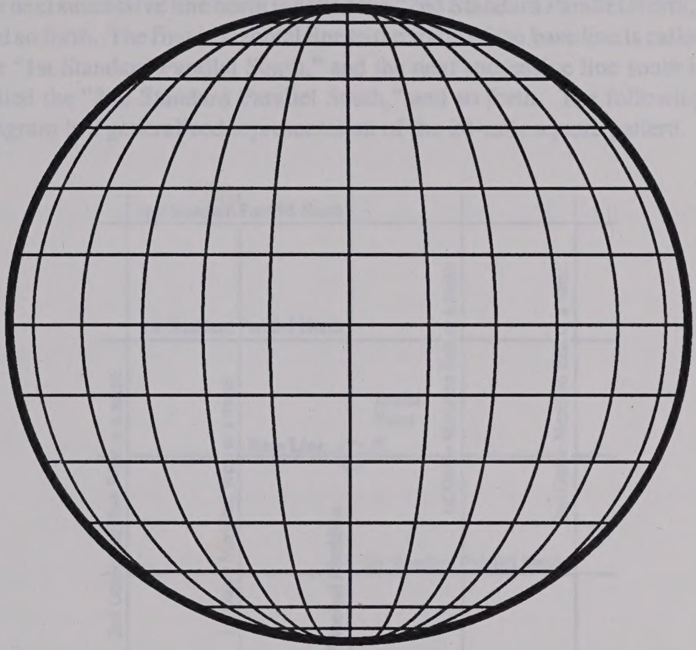
Monuments
Section Corners
Quarter Corners

Monuments, called section corners, are required to be set at each mile. A monument is also set between each section corner. These monuments are called quarter corners and are set so that a section can be subdivided into quarters.

Assistance

Study Guide

Because of the shape of the earth, principal meridians come closer together as they extend toward the North Pole.



Guide Meridians

If not corrected, a township on the base line would be larger than one further north. To adjust for this problem, correction lines called guide meridians are established.

Guide Meridians extend true north and south, generally at intervals of 24 miles to the east and to the west of the principal meridian. The vertical lines to the east or west of the principal meridian are known by either a name or a number, such as "1st Guide Meridian East" or "1st Guide Meridian West," or " 2nd Guide Meridian West," and others.

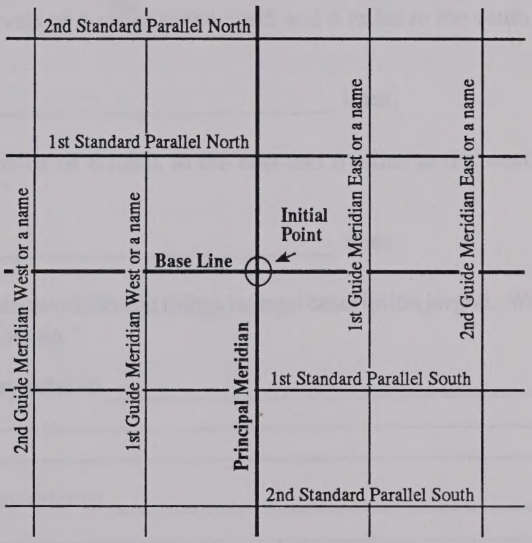
Standard Parallels

Another major control in the structure of the rectangular system is the establishment of standard parallels.

Assistance

Study Guide

Standard Parallels extend true east and west, generally at intervals of 24 miles to the north and to the south of the base line. The first horizontal line to the north of the base line is called the "1st Standard Parallel North," and the next successive line north is called the "2nd Standard Parallel North," and so forth. The first horizontal line to the south of the base line is called the "1st Standard Parallel South," and the next successive line south is called the "2nd Standard Parallel South," and so forth. The following diagram is a generalized representation of the 24-mile square pattern.


2nd Standard Parallel North
1st Standard Parallel North
Initial Point
Base Line
1st Standard Parallel South
2nd Standard Parallel South
2nd Guide Meridian West or a name
1st Guide Meridian West or a name
Principal Meridian
1st Guide Meridian East or a name
2nd Guide Meridian East or a name

Each of the squares in the diagram represents a 24-mile square tract, or an area of 576 square miles (not 24 square miles). Additional guide meridians may exist to the east and west, and additional standard parallels may exist to the north and south, depending on the control needed for further surveys.

Auxiliary Meridians and Parallels

Auxiliary Guide Meridians or Auxiliary Standard Parallels are established and named when the intervals exceed the distance of 24 miles.

Read and Answer Questions

Let's review what we've covered so far. Please write your responses on the blank lines. The answers are on page 22.

1. Before land can be measured, a surveyor must define an initial point for which the exact latitude and longitude are known. From that initial point, the surveyor runs two lines, one north-south, the other east-west.

   The north-south line is called the ______________________________.
   The east-west line is called the______________________________.

2. Lines are established at intervals of 6 miles to the north and 6 miles to the south of the base line.

   These lines are called ______________________________ lines.

3. Lines are established at intervals of 6 miles to the east and 6 miles to the west of the principal meridian.

   These lines are called ______________________________ lines.

4. The term "township" can mean two different things in legal description jargon. Write out two brief definitions of "township."

   A. The term "township" may refer to ______________________________
   ____
   ____.

   B. The term "township" may refer to ______________________________
   ____
   ____.

5. The correct number for the second to last section in a township is ______________.

6. Half townships and half ranges are referred to as ______________________________.

7. Monuments set at one-mile intervals are called ______________________________, and monuments in between the above monuments are called ______________________________.

8. The curvature of the earth's surface has created the need to provide control within the rectangular system. The two major controls are the ______________________________ and ______________________________.

Read and Answer Questions

The following are the answers to the questions on page 21.

1. The north-south line is called the Principal Meridian.
   The east-west line is called the Base Line.

2. These lines are called township lines.

3. These lines are called range lines.

4. A. The term "township" may refer to a series of 6-mile wide east-west coordinates.

   B. The term "township" may refer to a single 6-mile square area situated within two adjacent range lines and two adjacent township lines.

5. The correct number for the second to last section in a township is 35.

6. Half townships and half ranges are referred to as fractional townships.

7. Monuments set at one-mile intervals are called section corners, and monuments in between the above monuments are called quarter corners.

8. The two major controls are the guide meridians and standard parallels.

Assistance

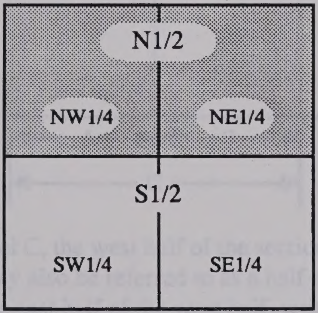
Study Guide

III. Subdivisions

Aliquot Parts

"Aliquot" is a Latin word meaning to divide (a number or quantity) into equal parts leaving no remainder. In legal descriptions, only quarter or half divisions of a section of land are known as "aliquot parts." An aliquot part is always described in relation to the four points of the compass, with the use of the standard compass abbreviations, N, W, S, E.

For example, to describe the west half of a section, you write "W1/2"; the east half would be written as "E1/2." The same rule applies to the north and south half, "N1/2" and "S1/2" respectively, as shown in the figure below. To describe each of the quarter-sections, you need to add one notation; that is, show which of the four corners is intended, such as "NE1/4," or "NW1/4," or "SW1/4," or "SE1/4."



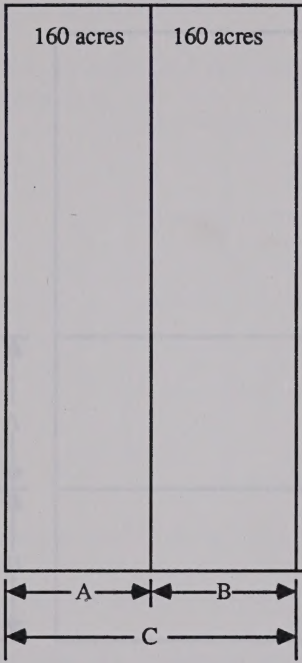
In describing adjoining quarter sections, combine NE1/4 and NW1/4 to make N1/2 or combine SW1/4 and SE1/4 to make S1/2.

The "1/2" and the "1/4" are the only fractions that appear in the description of land by aliquot parts.

Assistance

Study Guide

The figure below shows a section divided into several parcels of land. The letters A, B, and C are used to identify some of the parcels.



Half Section

Parcel C, the west half of the section, would be written as W1/2. Parcel C may also be referred to as a half-section. To describe parcel B, which is the east half of the west half, write E1/2W1/2.

IMPORTANT NOTE

Whenever describing a parcel of land within another parcel of land, always write the smaller parcel to the left of the larger parcel.

E1/2W1/2

Smaller parcel ↗ ↖ Larger parcel

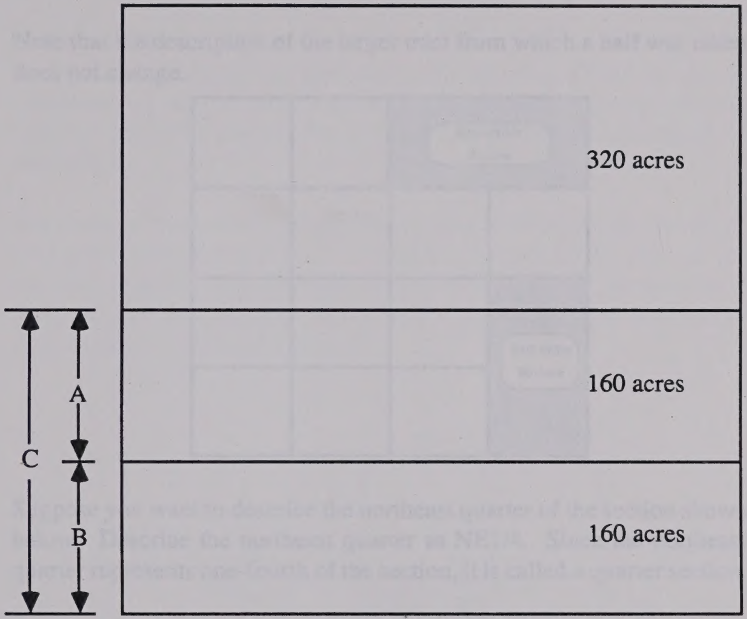
9. Write the description for parcel A?

See page 33 for the correct answer.

Assistance

Study Guide

The figure below shows a section divided horizontally instead of vertically.



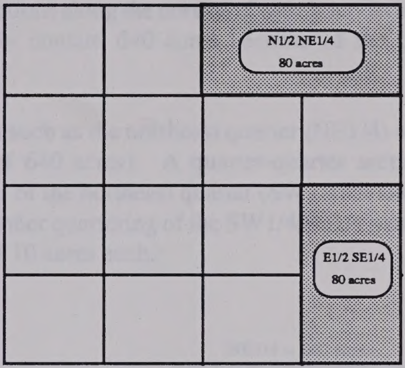
To describe parcel C, the south half of the section, write as S1/2. To describe parcel A, the north half of the south half, write N1/2S1/2.

10. Write the description for parcel B?

See page 33 for the correct answer.

Suppose that you want to describe the north half of the northeast quarter and the east half of the southeast quarter. These legal descriptions would be written as N1/2NE1/4 and E1/2SE1/4 respectively.

Note that the description of the larger tract from which a half was taken does not change.

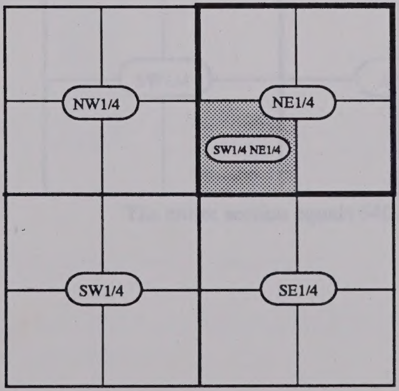


Quarter Section

Suppose you want to describe the northeast quarter of the section shown below. Describe the northeast quarter as NE1/4. Since the northeast quarter represents one-fourth of the section, it is called a quarter section.

Quarter-Quarter Section

To describe the southwest quarter of that quarter section, write SW1/4NE1/4.



The dark line is the boundary of the NE1/4. The shaded area shows the SW1/4 within the NE1/4, which is described as SW1/4NE1/4.

Assistance

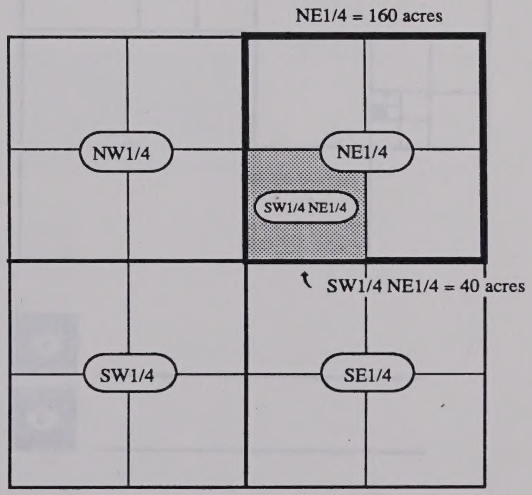
Study Guide

When writing an aliquot part description for a section, begin in the most northeastern portion and work in a counter-clockwise direction, regardless of where the largest portion is located.

Acreages

Perhaps we should take a moment here to look at the size, in acres, of the land we are learning to describe. Generally a section of land consists of 640 acres, but sections along the north and west boundaries of a township will not generally contain 640 acres because of the convergence of meridians.

A quarter section such as the northeast quarter (NE1/4) would consist of 160 acres (1/4 of 640 acres). A quarter-quarter section such as the southwest quarter of the northeast quarter (SW1/4NE1/4) would consist of 40 acres. A further quartering of the SW1/4NE1/4 parcel would result in four parcels of 10 acres each.



The entire section equals 640 acres

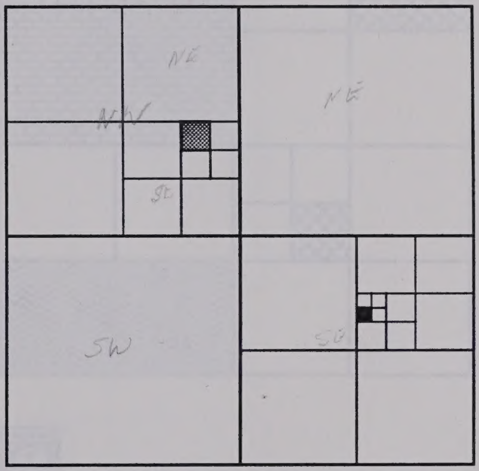
Assistance

Study Guide

Minor Subdivisions

The subdivisions of sections into 10- and 5-acre parcels follows the same rule you have already learned. Remember that when you describe a parcel of land within another parcel of land, the smaller parcel is always written to the left of the larger parcel. With each subdivision the legal description grows longer and to the left.

11. Try writing the legal descriptions for the two parcels shown below.



▨ a ______________________

■ b ______________________

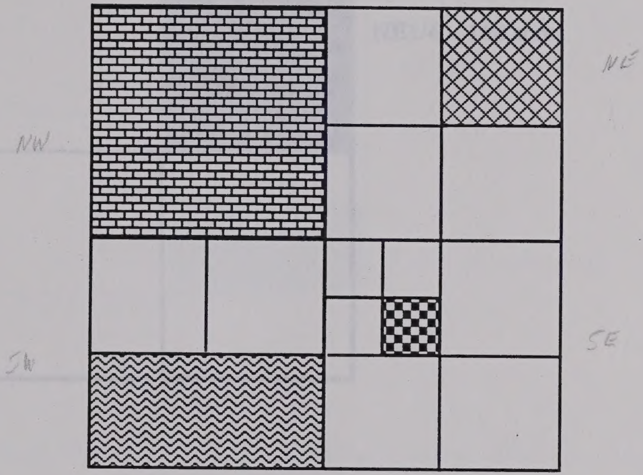
See page 33 for the correct answers.

A section may be further subdivided into 2.5- or 1.25-acre parcels, but this practice is not common.

Assistance

Study Guide

12. Selected parcels of land in the section shown below have been filled in with different patterns. Write the legal description for each parcel.



a ______________________________

b ______________________________

c ______________________________

d ______________________________

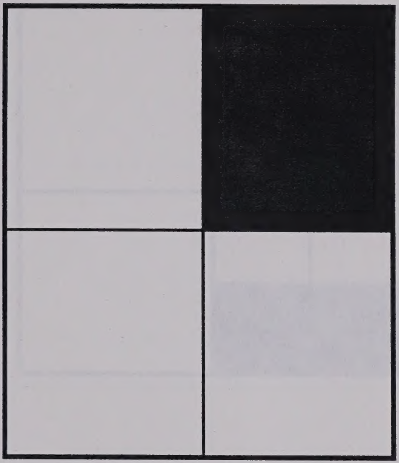
See page 33 for the correct answers.

Assistance

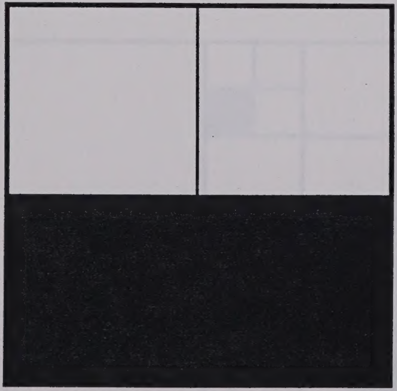
Study Guide

Review:

Remember that a 160- or 320-acre parcel contains only one aliquot part notation, such as:

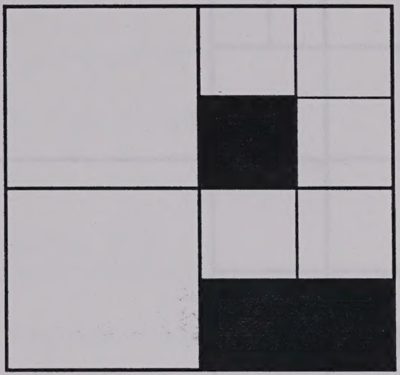


NE1/4 = 160 acres

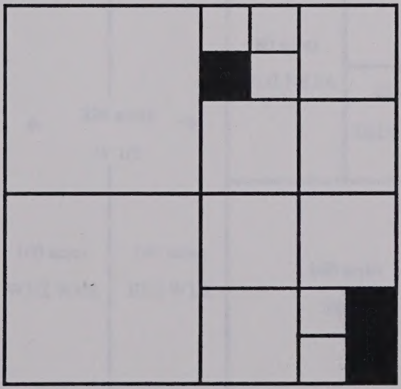


S1/2 = 320 acres

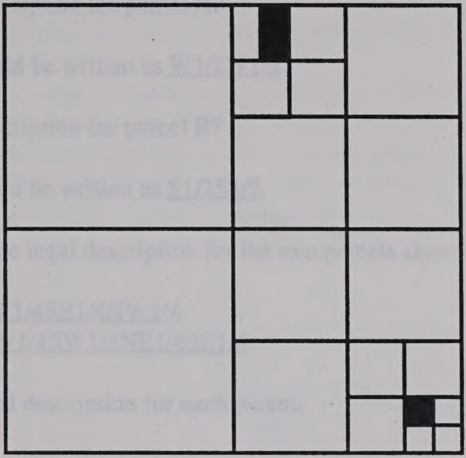
and that a 40- or 80-acre parcel contains two aliquot part notations, such as:


SW1/4NE1/4 = 40 acres
S1/2SE1/4 = 80 acres

A 10- or 20-acre parcel contains three aliquot part notations, such as:


SW1/4NW1/4NE1/4 = 10 acres
E1/2SE1/4SE1/4 = 20 acres

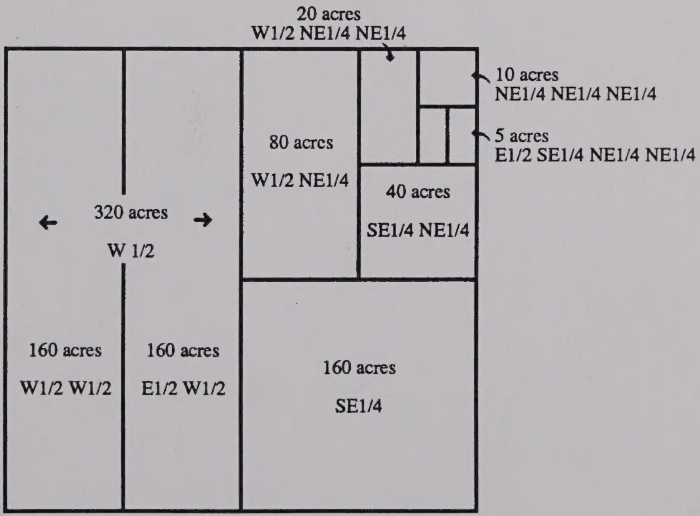
and a 2.5- or 5-acre parcel contains four aliquot part notations, such as:



E1/2NW1/4NW1/4NE1/4
= 5 acres

NW1/4SE1/4SE1/4SE1/4
= 2.5 acres

The figure below shows various configurations of aliquot parts, the acreage within that aliquot part and the proper legal description notation.


20 acres
W1/2 NE1/4 NE1/4
10 acres
NE1/4 NE1/4 NE1/4
5 acres
E1/2 SE1/4 NE1/4 NE1/4
80 acres
W1/2 NE1/4
40 acres
SE1/4 NE1/4
320 acres
W 1/2
160 acres
W1/2 W1/2
160 acres
E1/2 W1/2
160 acres
SE1/4

Read and Answer Questions

The following are the answers to questions 9, 10, 11, and 12.

9. Write the description for parcel A?

   Parcel A would be written as W1/2W1/2

10. Write the description for parcel B?

    Parcel B would be written as S1/2S1/2

11. Try writing the legal description for the two parcels shown below.

    a. NW1/4NE1/4SE1/4NW1/4
    b. SW1/4NW1/4SW1/4NE1/4SE1/4

12. Write the legal description for each parcel.

    a. NW1/4
    b. S1/2SW1/4
    c. NE1/4NE1/4
    d. SE1/4NW1/4SE1/4

Assistance

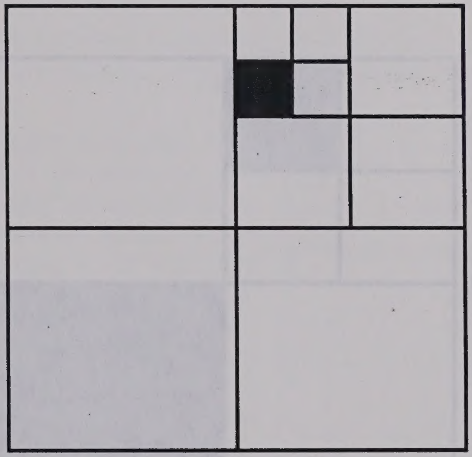
Study Guide

IV. The Comma

Comma

Seldom can the inadvertent omission or insertion of a comma be more misleading and do more damage than in a land description.

Commas in land descriptions mean "AND THE," whereas the absence of commas means "OF THE." To show the effect of a comma (or commas) in a land description, let's take a typical description of a 10-acre parcel. The notation SW1/4NW1/4NE 1/4 is read as "the southwest quarter of the northwest quarter of the northeast quarter."



SW1/4NW1/4NE1/4 = 10 acres

Assistance

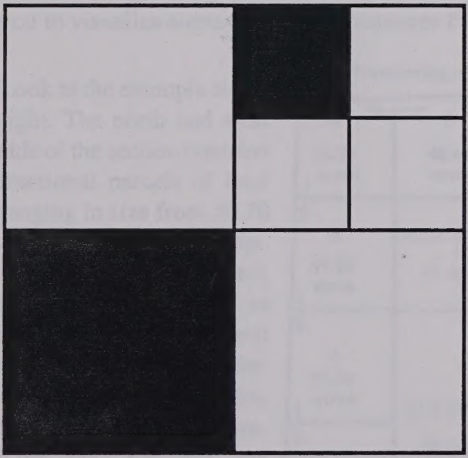
Study Guide

By inserting a single comma into the notation between SW1/4 and NW1/4 we have drastically changed the notation . Instead of describing

NW1/4NE1/4, SW1/4

comma inserted here

a single 10-acre parcel, we are now describing two separate parcels totalling 200 acres (160 acres and 40 acres respectively). The notation would now be read as "the southwest quarter and the northwest quarter of the northeast quarter."


NW1/4NE1/4,SW1/4 = 200 acres

V. Lots

Lotting of a Section

Lots are irregular or fractional parcels of land in a section that cannot be described as aliquot parts. They generally lie on the north and the west sides of a township, or along meandering lakes, ponds, or rivers.

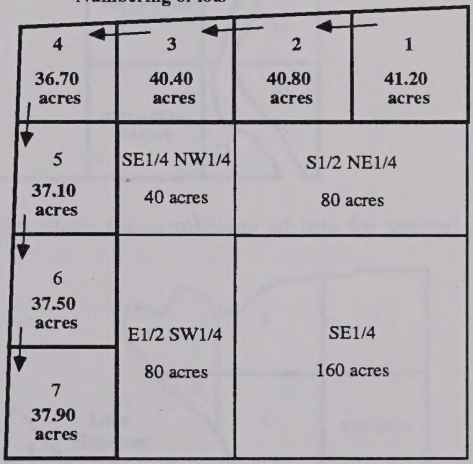
That lots are created as a result of irregularities in boundaries or resurveys presents unusual problems, which are beyond the scope of the self-study guide.

Be aware, however, that lots exist, that they serve a purpose in the rectangular system of survey, and that they generally are numbered by the same method as are sections.

The following example will show how lots are numbered and will help you to visualize some of the circumstances that result in lotting.

Look at the example to the right. The north and west side of the section contains fractional parcels of land ranging in size from 36.70 acres to 41.20 acres. Because these parcels cannot be described as aliquot parts, they cannot be considered as quarter-quarter sections. Hence, they are described as lots. Note that the lots are numbered consecutively from east to west and then from north to south.

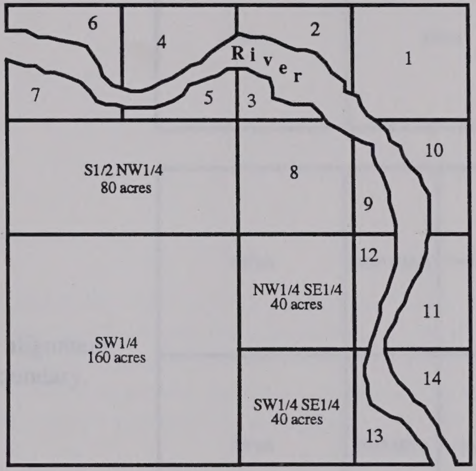
Numbering of lots


4
36.70 acres
3
40.40 acres
2
40.80 acres
1
41.20 acres
5
37.10 acres
SE1/4 NW1/4
40 acres
S1/2 NE1/4
80 acres
6
37.50 acres
E1/2 SW1/4
80 acres
SE1/4
160 acres
7
37.90 acres

Assistance

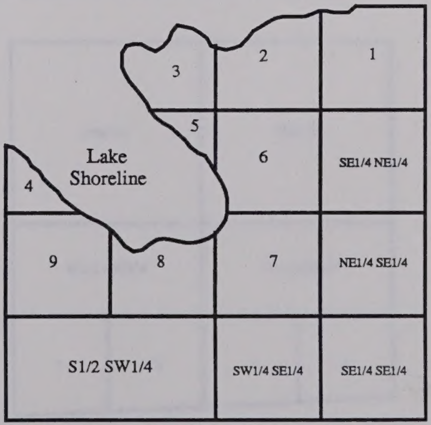
Study Guide

The next example shows a meandering river that has created fractional parcels of land along its banks. Note that the numbering begins in the northeast corner and continues west until each fractional parcel has been numbered. In the example, the top row contains lots 1 through 7. The second row is numbered from west to east, ending with lot 10. The third row is numbered from east to west ending with lot 12, and the fourth row is numbered from west to east ending with lot 14.


6
4
2
1
River
7
5
3
S1/2 NW1/4
80 acres
8
10
9
12
NW1/4 SE1/4
40 acres
11
SW1/4
160 acres
14
SW1/4 SE1/4
40 acres
13

The following five examples show the numbering of lots for several different situations.

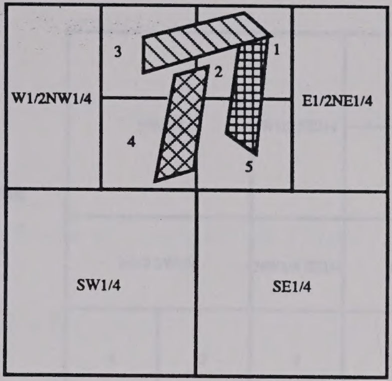
The shoreline of a lake.


2
1
3
5
6
SE1/4 NE1/4
Lake
Shoreline
4
9
8
7
NE1/4 SE1/4
S1/2 SW1/4
SW1/4 SE1/4
SE1/4 SE1/4

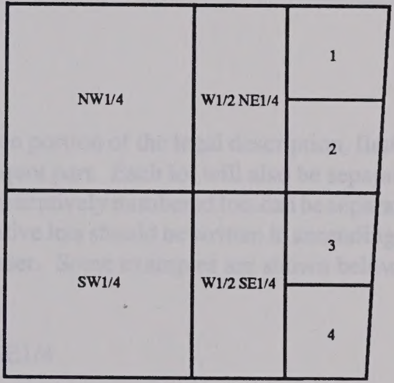
Assistance

Study Guide

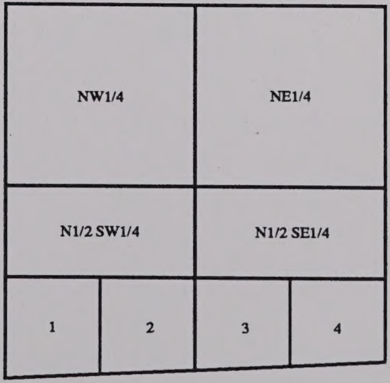
Mineral claims.


3
1
2
W1/2NW1/4
E1/2NE1/4
4
5
SW1/4
SE1/4

An irregular alignment of the east boundary.

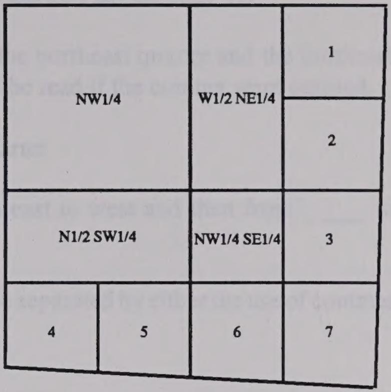

1
NW1/4
W1/2 NE1/4
2
3
SW1/4
W1/2 SE1/4
4

An irregular alignment of the south boundary.


NW1/4
NE1/4
N1/2 SW1/4
N1/2 SE1/4
1
2
3
4

Assistance

Study Guide



An irregular alignment of the east and south boundaries.

When writing the subdivision portion of the legal description, first write the lots, followed by the aliquot part. Each lot will also be separated by a comma. Three or more consecutively numbered lots can be separated by the word **thru**. Nonconsecutive lots should be written in ascending order from lowest to highest number. Some examples are shown below:

lot 1, SE1/4
lot 1 thru 4, inclusive, SE1/4
lot 1, 3, 9, 10, SE1/4

Read and Answer Questions

Please write your responses on the blank lines. The answers are on page 41.

1. The legal description NE,NE would be read as the northeast quarter and the northeast quarter. How would that same legal description be read if the comma were omitted.

   ... the northeast quarter ____ ____ northeast quarter

2. Lot numbers are numbered consecutively from east to west and then from _____ to _____.

3. Three or more consecutively numbered lots can be separated by either the use of commas or the use of the word __________.

Read and Answer Questions

The following are the answers to the questions on page 40.

1. The legal description NE,NE would be read as the northeast quarter and the northeast quarter. How would that same legal description be read if the comma were omitted.

   ... the northeast quarter of the northeast quarter

2. Lot numbers are numbered consecutively from east to west and then from north to south.

3. Three or more consecutively numbered lots can be separated by either the use of commas or the use of the word thru.

Assistance

Study Guide

VI. Special Surveys

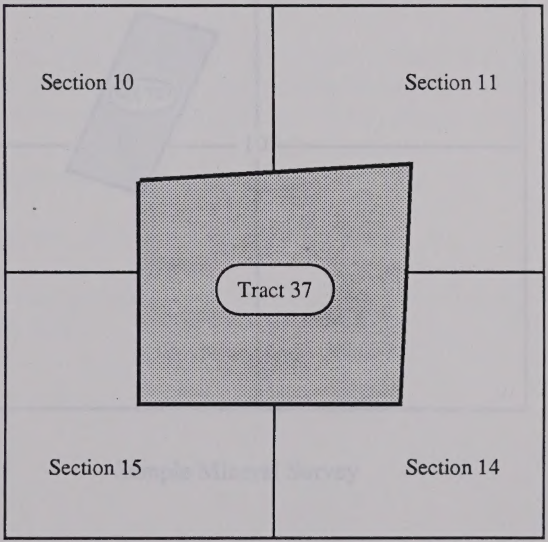
Special surveys involve unusual applications or departures from the rectangular system. Although there are many types of special surveys, we will cover only two types in this lesson -- tracts and metes and bounds.

Tracts

Tracts

Tract surveys involve areas of land that usually lie in more than one section or that cannot be described wholly as a part of a section. Tracts within a township are numbered beginning with 37 to avoid confusion with section numbers.

Tract Survey involving 4 sections



Assistance

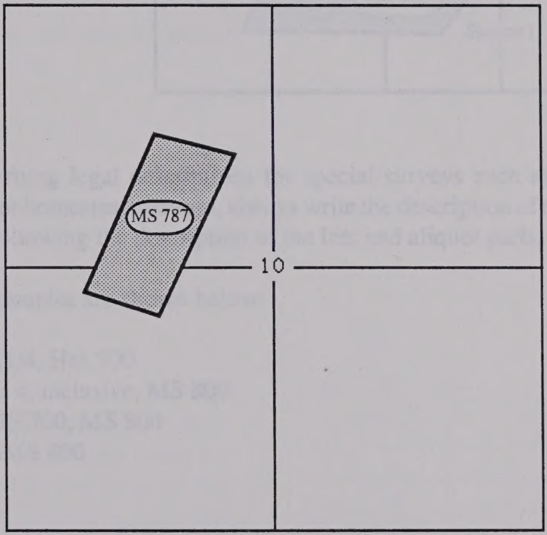
See Resource Aid 2 for more information about metes and bounds.

Study Guide

Metes and Bounds

Metes and bounds surveys are used for defining boundaries of an irregularly shaped parcel of land that cannot be practically described in any other way.

A metes and bounds survey may be appropriate for such cases as mineral claims, homestead claims, private land grants, national parks and monuments, and Indian reservations.



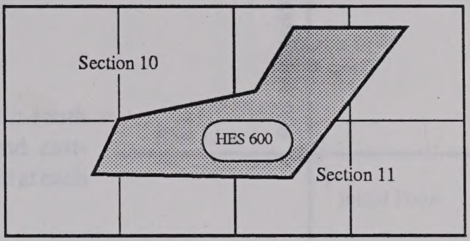
Sample Mineral Survey

Assistance

Study Guide

The BLM state office assigns mineral survey numbers upon receipt of a mineral survey application. Mineral survey numbers are issued consecutively. If the last mineral survey number issued was number MS-786, the next number issued will be MS-787.

Sample Homestead Survey



When writing legal descriptions for special surveys such as tracts or mineral or homestead surveys, always write the description of the special survey following the description of the lots and aliquot parts.

Some examples are shown below:

lot 1, SE1/4, Hes 700
lot 1 thru 4, inclusive, MS 800
lot 1, HES 700, MS 800
NW1/4, MS 800

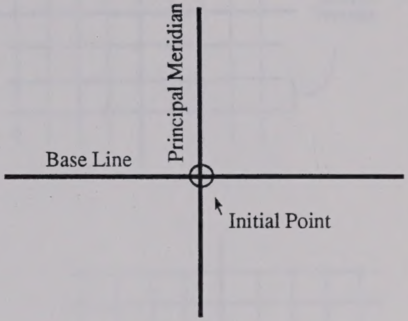
VII. Writing the Complete Legal Description

Initial Points

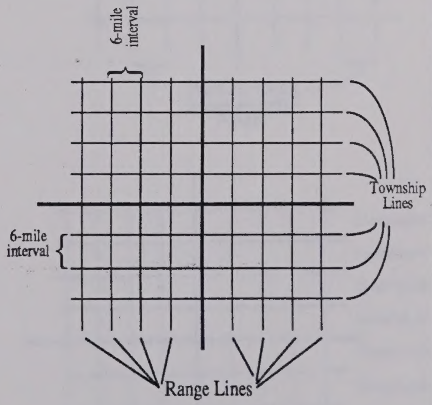
Up to this point you have learned that the entire rectangular system of survey is built around selected starting points called initial points.

Principal Meridians
Base Lines

You know that north-south principal meridians and east-west base lines intersect at each initial point.


Principal Meridian
Base Line
Initial Point

You also know that township lines are established every six miles north and south of the base line and that range lines are established every six miles east and west of the principal meridian.

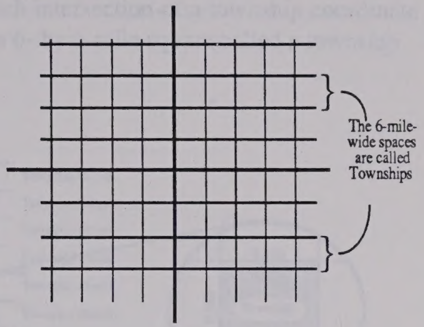

6-mile interval
Township Lines
6-mile interval
Range Lines

Assistance

Study Guide

Township Coordinate

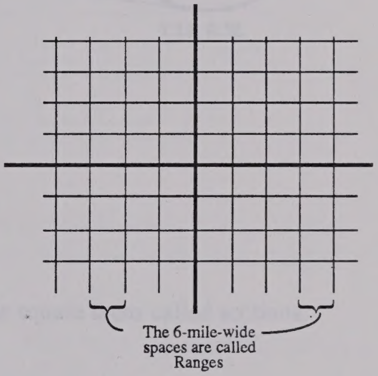
And you have learned that the 6-mile-wide spaces between each set of township lines represents an east-west coordinate called a township,


The 6-mile-wide spaces are called Townships

that

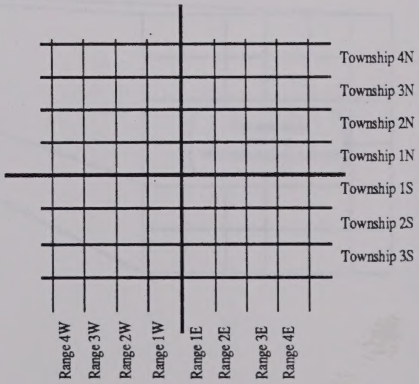
Range Coordinate

the 6-mile-wide spaces between each set of range lines represents a north-south coordinate called a range,


The 6-mile-wide spaces are called Ranges

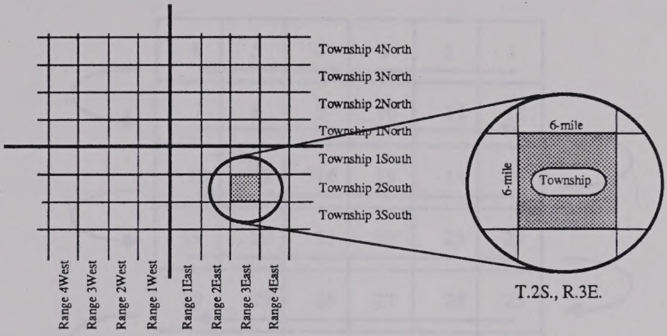
and that

the township and range coordinates are numbered according to their position relative to the base line and principal meridian.


Township 4N
Township 3N
Township 2N
Township 1N
Township 1S
Township 2S
Township 3S
Range 4W
Range 3W
Range 2W
Range 1W
Range 1E
Range 2E
Range 3E
Range 4E

Township

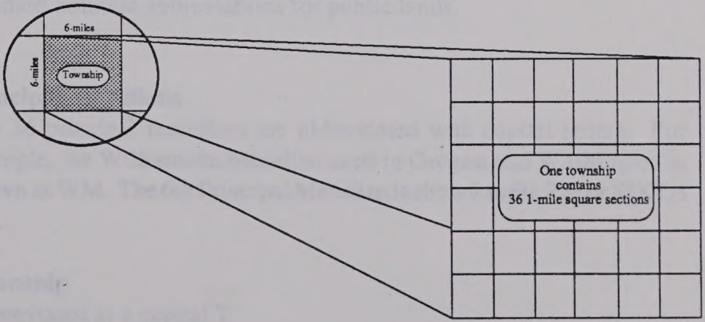
You have also learned that each intersection of a township coordinate and range coordinate creates a 6- by 6-mile square called a township


Township 4North
Township 3North
Township 2North
Township 1North
Township 1South
Township 2South
Township 3South
Range 4West
Range 3West
Range 2West
Range 1West
Range 1East
Range 2East
Range 3East
Range 4East
6-mile
6-mile
Township
T.2S., R.3E.

and that

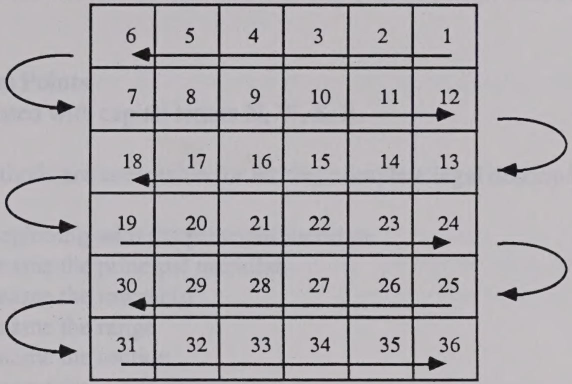
Section

each township consists of 36, 1-mile square areas called sections.


6-miles
6-miles
Township
One township contains 36 1-mile square sections

Numbering of Sections

You know that sections are numbered beginning with number 1 in the upper right corner and weaving alternately right-to-left, left-to-right, then right-to-left until all 36 sections have been numbered -- ending with number 36 in the lower right corner.



6	5	4	3	2	1
7	8	9	10	11	12
18	17	16	15	14	13
19	20	21	22	23	24
30	29	28	27	26	25
31	32	33	34	35	36

You've also learned how to describe parcels of land within a section, remembering that the smaller parcel of land is always written to the left of the larger parcel.

Abbreviations

See Resource Aid 4 Common Abbreviations

For consistency in legal descriptions, BLM has adopted the following standard notation abbreviations for public lands.

Principal Meridians
The 36 principal meridians are abbreviated with capital letters. For example, the Williamette Meridian used in Oregon and Washington is shown as WM. The 6th Principal Meridian is shown as 6th PM or SIXTH PM.

Township
Abbreviated as a capital T.

Assistance

Study Guide

Range
Abbreviated as a capital R.

Section
Abbreviated with lower case letters as sec. (with a period following the "c".)

Compass Points
Abbreviated with capital letters N, W, S, E.

Complete legal description

Two methods are acceptable for writing complete legal descriptions:

Method 1

1. Beginning with the principal meridian
   - name the principal meridian
   - name the township
   - name the range
   - name the section
   - name the subdivisions

A properly notated legal description beginning with the principal meridian would be written as follows:

6th PM, T.8 N., R.4 W., sec. 8, SE1/4NW1/4

Important Note
Look at the placement of the periods and commas.

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Study Guide

Method 2

2. Beginning with the subdivision
   - name the subdivision
   - name the section
   - name the township
   - name the range
   - name the principal meridian

A properly notated legal description beginning with the subdivision would be written like this:

W1/2NE1/4SW1/4, sec. 26, T.6 S., R.8 E., 5th PM

Multiple Townships

If several townships are included in the description, the primary order is determined by the range number, beginning with the lowest number, and within each range by the township numbers beginning with the lowest number.

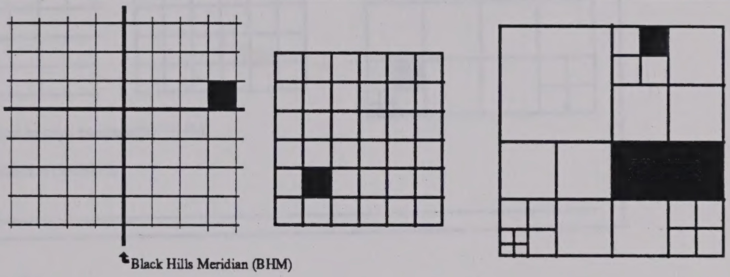
Where townships north and south of the base line or east and west of the meridian are involved, the order of listing is usually; first those north and east of the initial point, followed by those north and west, then those south and west and finally by those south and east.

Example:

Sixth PM
T.5N.,R.1E.
sec. 6 All;
sec. 7 All.
T.5N.,R.1W.
sec. 1 All;
sec. 12 All.
T.2S.,R.1W.
sec. 1 All;
T.2S.,R.1E.
sec. 6 All.

Write the complete legal descriptions for the highlighted parcels of land in each of the problems shown on the following two pages. Use method 1 for writing the first two legal descriptions and method 2 for writing the last two legal descriptions.

Example:

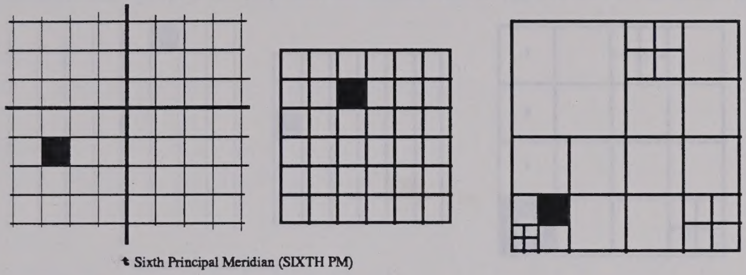


Write your legal description here (Method 1):

BHM, T.1N., R.4E., sec. 29, NE1/4 NW1/4 NE1/4, N1/2 SE1/4

Read and Answer Questions

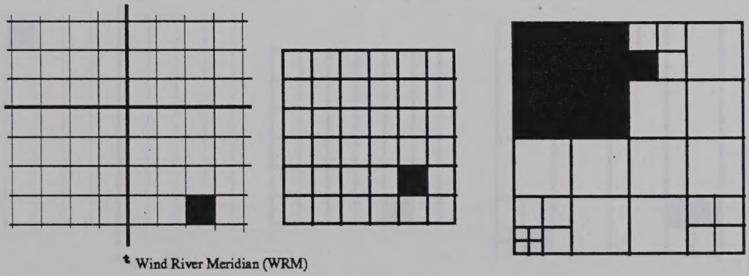
Problem 1


Sixth Principal Meridian (SIXTH PM)

Write your legal description here (Method 1):

Answer on page 54.

Problem 2

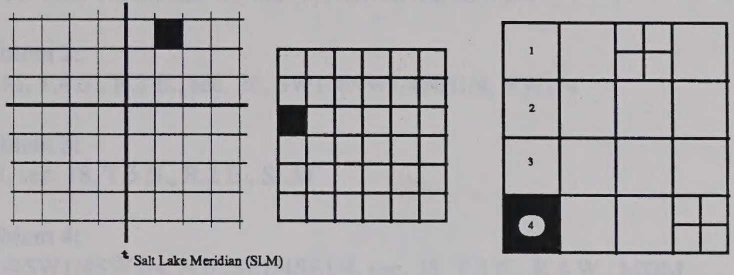

Wind River Meridian (WRM)

Write your legal description here (Method 1):

Answer on page 54.

Read and Answer Questions

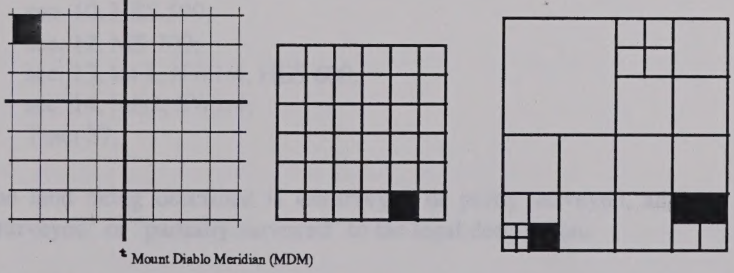
Problem 3


1
2
3
4
Salt Lake Meridian (SLM)

Write your legal description here (Method 2):

Answer on page 54.

Problem 4


Mount Diablo Meridian (MDM)

Write your legal description here (Method 2):

Answer on page 54.

Read and Answer Questions

Answers to problems on pages 52 and 53.

Problem 1:
SIXTH PM, T.2 S., R.3 W., sec. 9, NE1/4SW1/4SW1/4

Problem 2:
WRM, T.4 S., R.3 E., sec. 26, SW1/4NW1/4NE1/4, NW1/4

Problem 3:
lot 4, sec. 18, T.3 N., R.2 E., SLM

Problem 4:
SE1/4SW1/4SW1/4, N1/2SE1/4SE1/4, sec. 35, T.3 N., R.4 W., MDM

When writing multiple land descriptions within a township, end all lines with a semicolon except for the last line, which should end with a period.

For example:

SIXTH PM,
T & R
sec. 1, lot 1,4, SE1/4;
sec. 2, all;
sec. 3, lot 1 thru 4, inclusive, S1/2N1/2;
sec. 10, HES 599;
sec. 12, MS 700;
sec. 13, lot 1, NW1/4, HES 600;
sec. 14, N1/2, SW1/4;
Tract 37.

If the land being described is unsurveyed or partly surveyed, add the words "unsurveyed" or "partially surveyed" to the legal description.

For example:

SIXTH PM,
T & R
sec. 1, all, unsurveyed;
sec. 2, all, partially surveyed;
sec. 3, all.

LESSON 2

LAND STATUS

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES:

After successfully completing this lesson, you will be able:

1. to list the six components of the land status records system: Master Title Plat, Use Plats and Supplemental Plats, Historical Index, Control Document Index, Index to Miscellaneous Documents, and Serial Register Page,
2. to list the sources and location of land status records, and
3. to use land status records to research and document the current status of any parcel of public land.

LESSON 2: Land Status

Assistance

Study Guide

View the video tape Land Status

I. View the Land Status segment of the video tape. This video will provide you with the proper foundation to work through this section of the self-study guide.

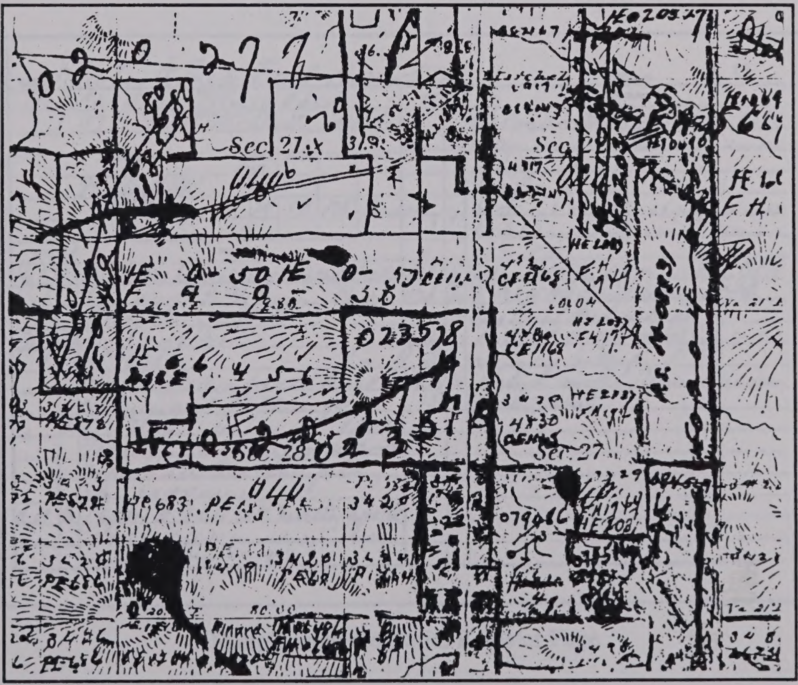
View the Land Status segment of the video tape now.

II. In the Beginning

Cadastral Survey Plat

A systematic approach to recordkeeping for the public lands began over 200 years ago with the Ordinance of 1785. That ordinance set forth the use of the Cadastral Survey Plat, a system for recording land patents and related case records essential to the chain of title in the public domain states.

The cadastral survey plat worked well at first. However, the handwritten entries soon became difficult to read and track. A portion of a plat is shown below.



Assistance

Study Guide

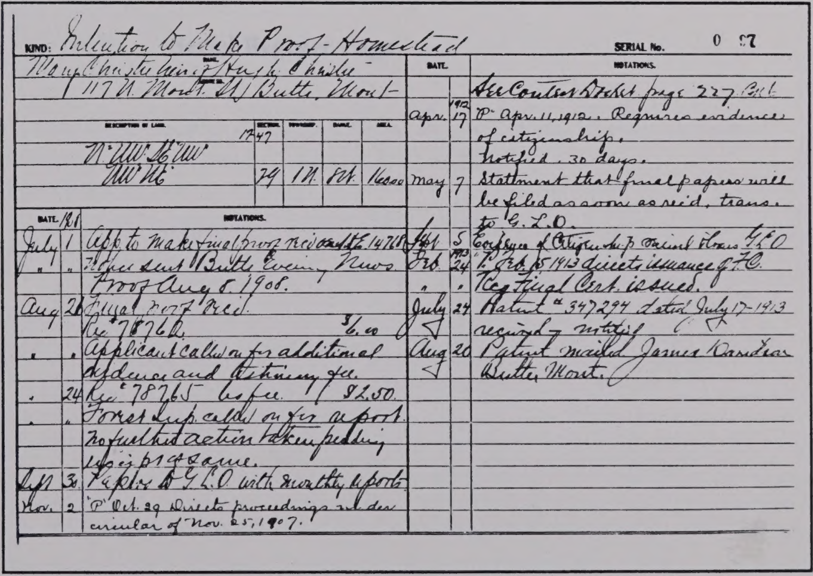
Tract Book System

In 1800, the tract book system was established by an Act of Congress. This new recording system was designed to be a permanent reference for all land transactions for the survey of public lands. These tract books were broken down by:

- State
- Territory
- Meridian
- Township
- Range
- Section and subdivision

Serial Register System

By 1908 there was a need to document the history of each land case transaction that occurred on the public land. The Serial Register System was designed to accomplish this purpose. Every transaction within a state was given a serial number so that each event that occurred could be recorded on the register.



KIND: Intention to Make Proof - Homestead SERIAL No. 0 [illegible]7

NAME. Mary Christie wife of Hugh Christie

ADDRESS. (117 W. Mont. St.) Butte, Mont.

DESCRIPTION OF LAND.	SECTION.	TOWNSHIP.	RANGE.	AREA.
1747				
N½ NW¼ SE¼ NW¼				
NW¼ NE¼	29	1N.	8W.	160.00

DATE.	1908	NOTATIONS.
July	1	App to make final proof rec'd and H.E. 14768
"	"	Notice sent Butte Evening News. Proof Aug 8. 1908.
Aug	26	Final proof rec'd. Rec. 78762. $6.00
"	"	Applicant called on for additional evidence and testimony fee.
"	24	Rec. 78765 test. fee $2.50.
"	"	Forest Sup. called on for report. No further action taken pending receipt of same.
Sept	30	Papers to G.L.O. with monthly reports.
Nov.	2	"P" Oct. 29 Directs proceedings under circular of Nov. 25, 1907.

DATE.		NOTATIONS.
		See Contest Docket page 227 [illegible]
Apr.	1912 17	"P" Apr. 11, 1912. Requires evidence of citizenship. Notified. 30 days.
May	7	Statement that final papers will be filed as soon as rec'd. trans. to G.L.O.
[illegible]	5	Evidence of Citizenship trans. to G.L.O.
Feb.	1913 24	"P" Feb. 15 1913 directs issuance of F.C.
"	"	Reg Final Cert. issued.
July	24	Patent # 347294 dated July 17-1913 received - notified
Aug	20	Patent mailed James Vandeer Butte, Mont.

Sample from old Serial Register Page

Assistance

Study Guide

Land Status Records System

Tracking land status through numerous handwritten entries was awkward at best. By 1955, the Tract Book System had become so difficult to read and cumbersome to use that Congress authorized the establishment of yet another records system. This system is generally referred to as the Land Status Records System.

The first step in the new system was to microfilm all patents, withdrawals, proclamations, orders, and other related documents that affect land status. The Land Status Records System consists of six parts. They are the

Master Title Plat

Use Plats and Supplemental Plats

Historical Index

Control Document Index

Index to Miscellaneous Documents

Serial Register Page

Read and Answer Questions

Please answer the following review questions before moving on to Part III. Circle the correct answer.

1. The Ordinance of 1785 instituted a system for recording transactions on the public lands. The main feature of the system was a document called?
   - A. the Serial Register Page
   - B. the Cadastral Survey Plat
   - C. the Ordinance Tract Book
2. After being in use for a number of years, the system created by the Ordinance of 1785 became difficult to use and maintain. In 1800, Congress established a new system. This new system required all transactions to be recorded in?
   - A. Tract Books
   - B. Serial Register Books
   - C. Land Transaction Plat Books
3. In the early 1900s, another system was designed and implemented. This system required the assignment of a number to each transaction to make tracking records easier. The system was called?
   - A. The Numerical Index System
   - B. The Master Title Plat System
   - C. The Serial Register System
4. In 1955, a new system was established. This system, which makes extensive use of microfilming, is the system in current use. It is the?
   - A. Land Status Records System
   - B. Public Land Automated Tracking (Plat) System
   - C. Master Title Plat System.

See the following page for answers.

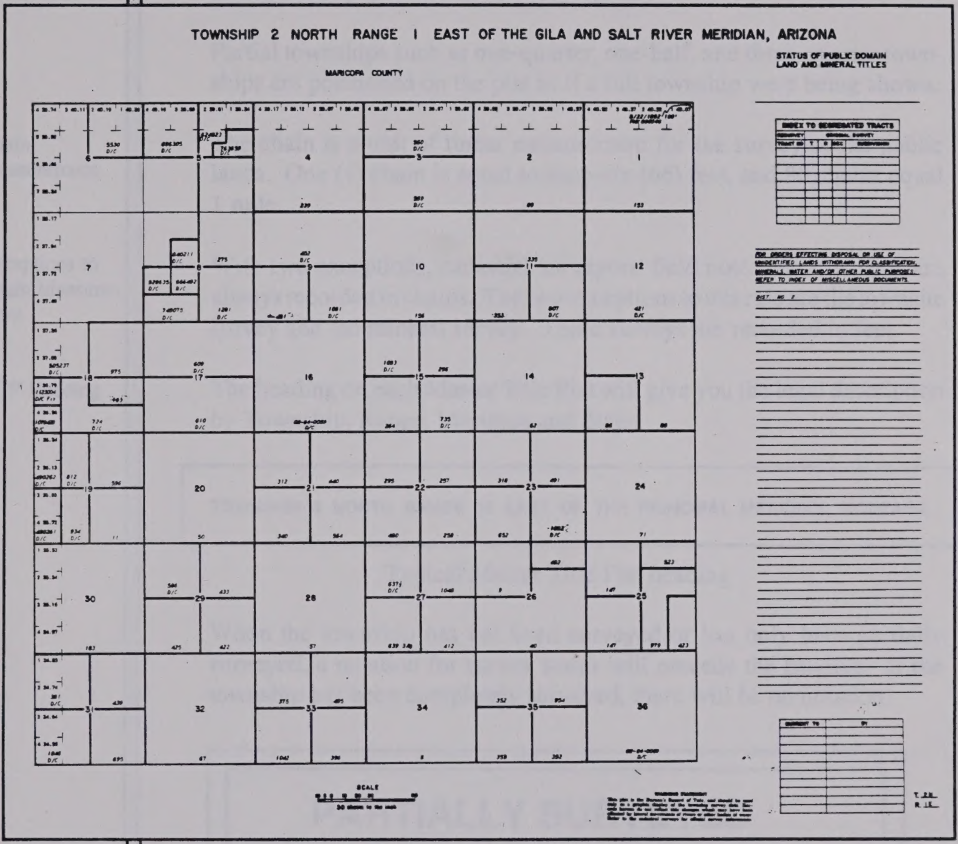
Read and Answer Questions

Answers to review questions for Part II.

1. B. The Cadastral Survey Plat
2. A. Tract Books
3. C. The Serial Register System
4. A. Land Status Records System

BLM Library
Denver Federal Center
Bldg. 85, OC-521
P.O. Box 25047
Denver, CO 80225

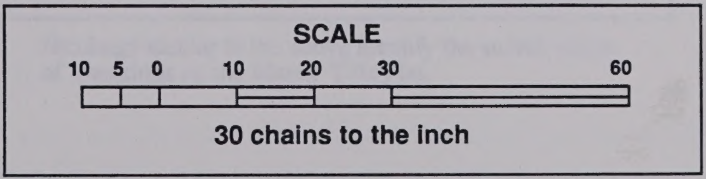
III. Master Title Plat


TOWNSHIP 2 NORTH RANGE I EAST OF THE GILA AND SALT RIVER MERIDIAN, ARIZONA
MARICOPA COUNTY
STATUS OF PUBLIC DOMAIN LAND AND MINERAL TITLES
INDEX TO SEGREGATED TRACTS
FOR ORDERS EFFECTING DISPOSAL OR USE OF UNIDENTIFIED LANDS WITHDRAWN FOR CLASSIFICATION, MINERALS, WATER AND/OR OTHER PUBLIC PURPOSES, REFER TO INDEX OF MISCELLANEOUS DOCUMENTS.
6
5
4
3
2
1
7
8
9
10
11
12
18
17
16
15
14
13
19
20
21
22
23
24
30
29
28
27
26
25
31
32
33
34
35
36
SCALE
30 chains to the inch
T. 2 N.
R. 1 E.

Master Title Plat

The Master Title Plat, abbreviated MTP, is a graphic display of the township survey data. Information taken from the cadastral survey data are compiled onto a mylar base and drawn at a scale of 30 chains equal to 1 inch or 2.666 inches per mile.

Scale


SCALE
10
5
0
10
20
30
60
30 chains to the inch

Bar scale from Master Title Plat

A mylar base is used so when changes occur in either the land status or the survey status, updates can be easily made.

Partial townships such as one-quarter, one-half, and three-quarter townships are positioned on the plat as if a full township were being shown.

Chain Measurement

The chain is a unit of linear measurement for the survey of the public lands. One (1) chain is equal to sixty-six (66) feet, and 80 chains equal 1 mile.

Exceptions to Chain Measurement

With two exceptions, cadastral surveyors' field note measurements are always recorded in chains. The two exceptions to this rule are the townsite survey and the mineral survey. These surveys are recorded in feet.

MTP Heading

The heading on each Master Title Plat will give you the legal description by Township, Range, Meridian and State.

TOWNSHIP 3 NORTH RANGE 18 EAST OF THE PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, MONTANA

Typical Master Title Plat heading

When the township has not been surveyed or has only been partially surveyed, a notation for survey status will precede the heading. If the township has been completely surveyed, there will be no notation.

PARTIALLY SURVEYED

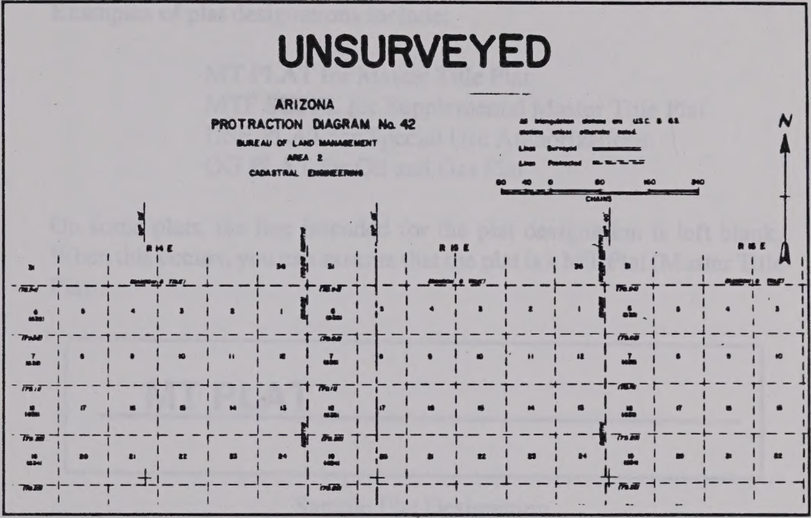
UNSURVEYED

Headings similar to the above identify the survey status of townships on the Master Title Plat.

Protraction Diagram

When a township is unsurveyed, the information to compile the MTP is taken from an approved protraction diagram.

The protraction diagram is a graphic display of the extension of the rectangular survey system over unsurveyed public lands



A portion of an approved Protraction Diagram

Also, if there has been an updated survey on the land, the most recent information will be described on the plat.

All newly drafted MTP's must have the following statement on the bottom right side of the township diagram:

Disclaimer

“This plat is the Bureau’s Record of Title, and should be used only as a graphic display of the township survey data. Records hereon do not reflect title changes which may have been effected by lateral movements of rivers or other bodies of water. Refer to the cadastral surveys for official survey information.”

Column Information

The column on the right side of the MTP lists and contains information to aid the reader.

At the top of this column the following statement will appear:

STATUS OF PUBLIC DOMAIN
LAND AND MINERAL TITLES

Plat Designations

Next, on the right, is a single line that designates the kind of plat. Examples of plat designations include:

MT PLAT for Master Title Plat
MTP SUPPL for Supplemental Master Title Plat
USE PLAT for Special Use Authorizations
OG PLAT for Oil and Gas Plat

On some plats, the line intended for the plat designation is left blank. When this occurs, you can assume that the plat is a MT Plat (Master Title Plat).

MT PLAT

Sample Plat Designation

Index to Segregated Tracts

Underneath the plat designation is a box labeled Index to Segregated Tracts. This box shows the resurvey tract numbers for any resurveys. In addition to the resurvey tract number, the box contains information about the Township, Range, Section, and subdivision in the original survey from which the resurvey was made.

INDEX TO SEGREGATED TRACTS

RESURVEY	ORIGINAL SURVEY			
TRACT NO	T	R	SEC	SUBDIVISION
37	16N	30E	17	SW1/4 NW1/4, N1/2 SW1/4
37	16N	30E	20	NW1/4 NE1/4

Sample Index to Segregated Tracts

Remarks Area

Below the Index to Segregated Tracts box is an area for writing out information that does not appear on the plat. This area, which is ruled for entering text, is commonly referred to as the "Remarks" area of the plat. The following statement will appear at either the top (older plats) or bottom (newer plats) of the remarks area:

> FOR ORDERS EFFECTING DISPOSAL OR USE OF
> UNIDENTIFIED LANDS WITHDRAWN FOR CLASSIFICATION,
> MINERALS, WATER AND/OR OTHER PUBLIC PURPOSES,
> REFER TO INDEX OF MISCELLANEOUS DOCUMENTS.

The above statement refers users of the plat who are looking for information about the disposal or use of unidentified lands to another document within the Land Status Record System - The Index to Miscellaneous Documents. Information about the Index to Miscellaneous Documents will be covered later in this lesson.

The remarks area will also contain information on actions that cannot be entered on the plat such as:

1. Pending Surveys
2. Cases that are subject to prior existing rights or claims
3. Petitions for Restoration of Lands
4. Unit Agreements
5. Segregative effect on certain lands, such as lands closed to mining but open to mineral leasing.

The information noted in the remarks area should be read before proceeding with any work associated with the plat. If you fail to check the remarks area for restrictions and reservations to land status information, you may end up making erroneous decisions or judgements regarding a parcel of land.

In the lower right hand corner of the plat, immediately below the remarks area, is an area of information helpful in locating and using the plat.

"Current to"

Notice the box labeled "Current to." The date that information was last entered on the plat should be entered here. Current procedures in many states allow the use of an automatic date-stamping machine that stamps the date in close proximity to the "Current to" box.

On newer versions of plats, there will be another box that lists any use plats that have been made for the same township.

In the lower right hand corner of this area, there will be a set of abbreviations showing the Meridian, the Township, and the Range.

CURRENT TO	**CURRENT TO**

USE PLATS:

MD Mer
T. ________
R. ________

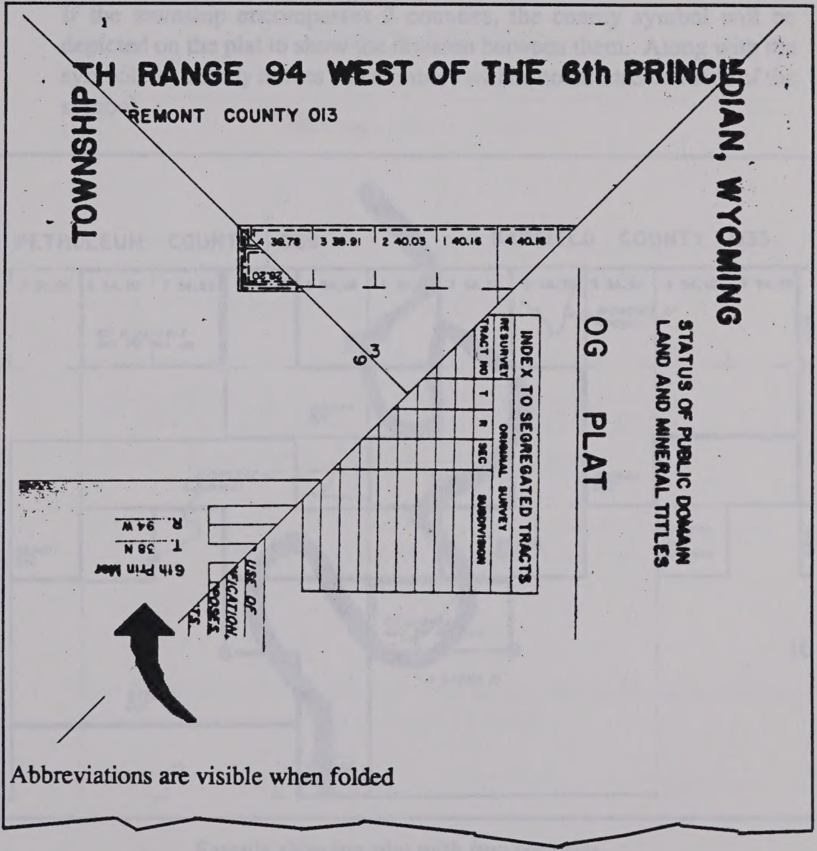
Sample showing lower right hand area of a Master Title Plat.
These boxes are commonly referred to as the "Current To" boxes.

Assistance

Study Guide

The abbreviations for Township and Range are positioned to be visible when the plat is folded to a size of approximately 81/2 x 11 inches. This prevents the user from having to unfold the plat to identify its contents.

Folded Plat


TOWNSHIP
TH RANGE 94 WEST OF THE 6th PRINCI
DIAN, WYOMING
REMONT COUNTY 013
OG PLAT
STATUS OF PUBLIC DOMAIN
LAND AND MINERAL TITLES
INDEX TO SEGREGATED TRACTS
RESURVEY
ORIGINAL SURVEY
TRACT NO
T
R
SEC
SUBDIVISION
6th Prin Mer
T. 38 N
R. 94 W

Abbreviations are visible when folded

One common way to fold an MTP

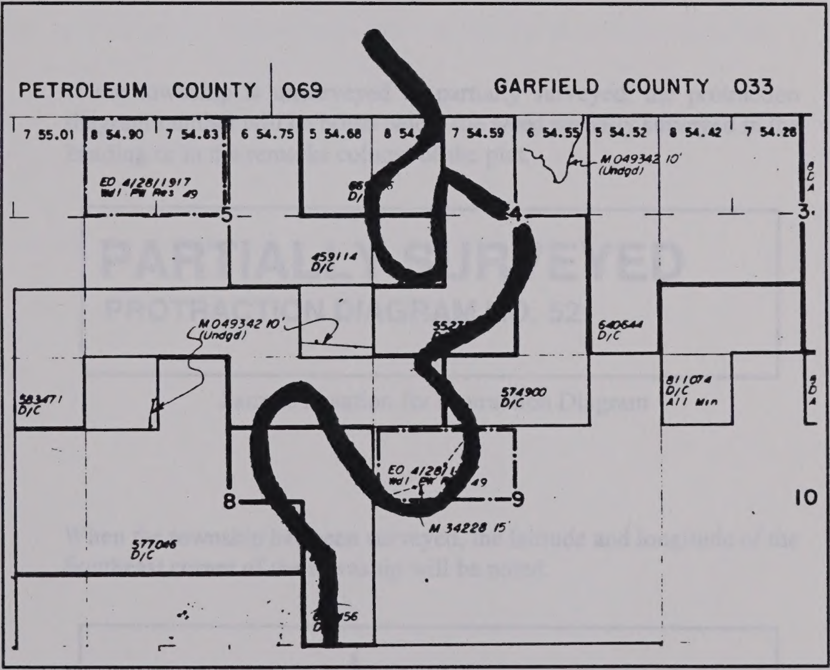
Assistance

Study Guide

Additional information on a plat that may be helpful is the county name and/or number, district name or number, protraction diagram number, latitude and longitude.

County Name and Number

The County name and number is centered above the diagram on the plat. If the township encompasses 2 counties, the county symbol will be depicted on the plat to show the division between them. Along with the symbol, the county names and numbers will be noted on either side of the symbol.


PETROLEUM COUNTY 069
GARFIELD COUNTY 033
7 55.01
8 54.90
7 54.83
6 54.75
5 54.68
8 54.
7 54.59
6 54.55
5 54.52
8 54.42
7 54.28
ED 4/28/1917 Wd/ PW Res 49
M 049342 10' (Undgd)
459114 D/C
640644 D/C
583471 D/C
574900 D/C
811074 D/C All Min
EO 4/28/ Wd/ PW 49
M 34228 15'
577046 D/C
5
4
3
8
9
10

Sample showing plat with two counties

Assistance

Study Guide

District Name

District name and/or number are sometimes noted below the county name or referenced in the remarks column.

ESMERALDA COUNTY

LAS VEGAS GR DIST

Sample District Notation

Protraction Diagram Number

If the township is unsurveyed or partially surveyed, the protraction diagram number will be noted below the word partially surveyed in the heading or in the remarks column of the plat.

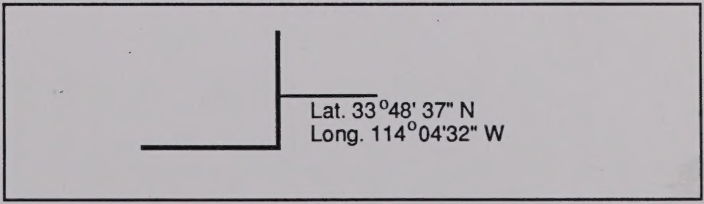
PARTIALLY SURVEYED

PROTRACTION DIAGRAM NO. 52

Sample Notation for Protraction Diagram

Latitude and Longitude

When the township has been surveyed, the latitude and longitude of the Southeast corner of the township will be noted.



Sample Notation Showing Latitude and Longitude

Read and Answer Questions

Let's review what we've covered so far. Write your answers on the blank lines.

1. ______________ is a graphic display of the township survey data.
2. The statement, "Status of Public Domain Land and Mineral Titles" appears on the top of the _________________ column.
3. OG Plat is the abbreviation for _____ _____ _____ ______.
4. The Index to Segregated Tracts shows __________________.
5. The area used for writing information which does not appear on the plat is called __________.
6. The box on the plat that holds the date which information was last entered is labeled _______________.

The answers to these questions can be found on the following page.

Read and Answer Questions

The following are answers to the questions on page 69.

1. Master Title Plat is a graphic display of the township survey data.

2. The statement, "Status of Public Domain Land and Mineral Titles" appears on the top of the right - hand column.

3. OG Plat is the abbreviation for Oil and Gas Plat.

4. The Index to Segregated Tracts shows the resurvey tract numbers for any resurvey.

5. The area used for writing information which does not appear on the plat is called remarks.

6. The box on the plat that holds the date which information was last entered is labeled current to.

Assistance

Study Guide

Abbreviations and Symbols

Resource Aid 4 Common Abbreviations for BLM Records

Resource Aid 5 Commonly Used Symbols

Knowing the meanings of abbreviations and symbols is vital to understand land status records. In fact, there are so many abbreviations and symbols used in land status work that without an abbreviation and symbol key, first time or infrequent users will find interpretation of plats and other documentation difficult. To assist users, each BLM State Office has a listing of abbreviations and symbols to use with the Land Status Records System.

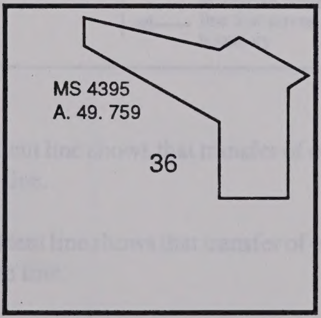
Different weights or thickness of lines are used to show ownership status on the Master Title Plats. The lines discussed here are the:

Survey weight line	─
Single weight patent line	━
Double weight patent line	▬

Survey Weight Line

The survey weight line is a thin line that depicts the boundaries of a section or the boundaries of special surveys within a township. The survey weight line is drawn for the section boundary regardless of whether the section is surveyed or unsurveyed.

Special surveys such as homestead and mineral surveys are also depicted by the use of the survey weight line.



Depiction of mineral survey using a survey weight line.

Assistance

Study Guide

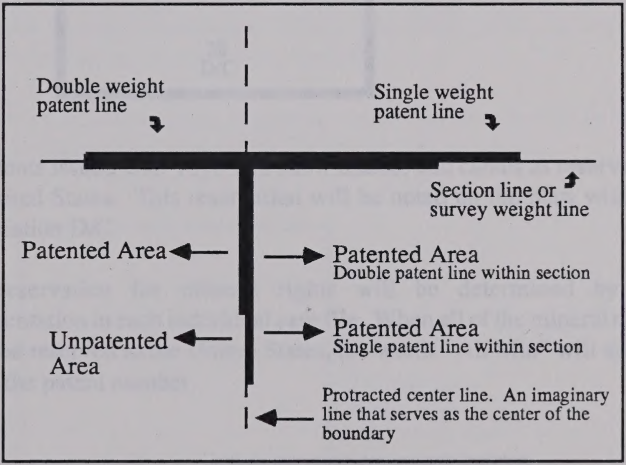
Patent

A patent as it relates to public land laws, is the instrument (or deed) by which the government conveys title to the public lands.

Single and Double Weight Patent Lines

There are two thicknesses or weights of lines used for depicting the boundaries of patented land. The two patent lines are referred to as the single weight patent line and the double weight patent line. The double weight patent line is twice as thick as the single weight patent line.

These patent lines are used to show the transfer of land title from federal ownership to private or state ownership. Patent lines are drafted around the entire exterior boundary of the parcel of land that has been transferred.


Double weight patent line
Single weight patent line
Section line or survey weight line
Patented Area
Patented Area
Double patent line within section
Unpatented Area
Patented Area
Single patent line within section
Protracted center line. An imaginary line that serves as the center of the boundary

A single weight patent line shows that transfer of ownership has occurred on one side of the line.

A double weight patent line shows that transfer of ownership has occurred on both sides of the line.

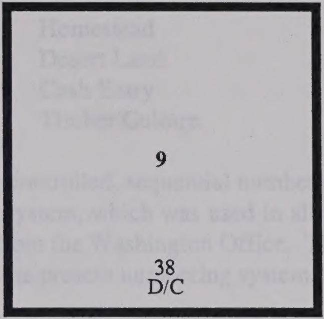
Assistance

Study Guide

Patent Number

Reserved Rights

Each parcel of patented land is assigned a patent number. The number is noted at or near the lowest part of the described parcel of land. Immediately below the patent number, any reserved rights that the federal government is retaining will be shown.

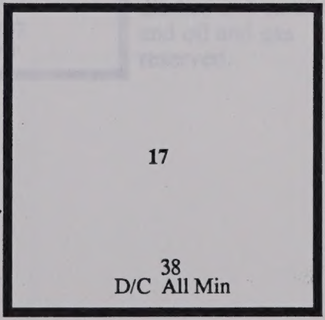


This shows an original patent with ditches and canals reserved.

All patents issued after 1890 will show ditches and canals as reserved to the United States. This reservation will be noted on the plats with the abbreviation D/C.

Any reservation for mineral rights will be determined by the documentation in each individual case file. When all of the mineral rights are to be reserved to the United States, the words "All Min" will appear below the patent number.

This shows an original patent with ditches, canals, and all minerals reserved.



Sequential Numbering System

Early patent numbers used a sequential numbering system. The first patent number was issued under the Homestead Act of 1862.

Each land district office started with patent number "1" for each of the following four types of land entries.

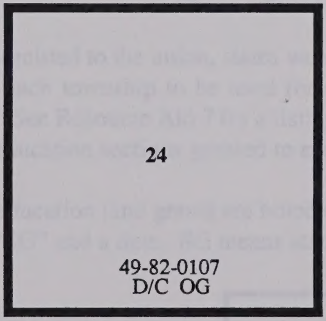
Homestead
Desert Land
Cash Entry
Timber Culture

Centrally Controlled Numbering System 1908 - 1964

A centrally controlled, sequential numbering system was introduced in 1908. The system, which was used in all states, required patents to be numbered from the Washington Office. The 1908 system was replaced in 1964 by the present numbering system.

State Controlled Numbering System 1964 - Present

In 1964, BLM established a state controlled numbering system in which each state issued the numbers for the patents in that state(s).



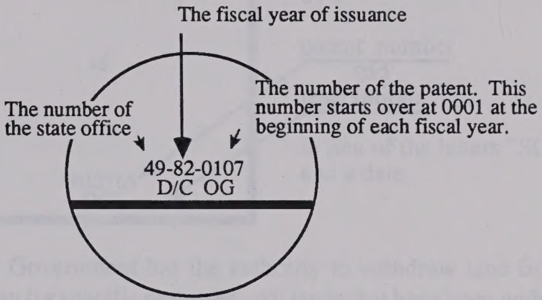
This shows a patent issued after 1964 with ditches and canals, and oil and gas reserved.

Resource Aid 6
State Codes for
Patent
Numbering

The first two digits of the patent number identify the state office that issued the patent. A list of these numbers can be found in Resource Aid 6.

The second pair of numbers identify the fiscal year of issuance. The government fiscal year begins on October 1st of each calendar year. Fiscal year 1982 would begin on October 1, 1981 and end on September 30, 1982.

The last four digits represent the number of the patent issued during that fiscal year.

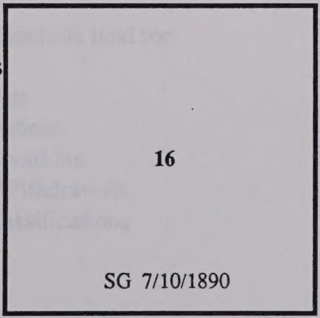

The fiscal year of issuance
The number of the state office
The number of the patent. This number starts over at 0001 at the beginning of each fiscal year.
49-82-0107
D/C OG

Land Grants for
Education

Resource Aid 7
Public Education
Land Grants

When admitted to the union, states were granted from 1 to 4 sections of land in each township to be used for support of the public education system. See Resource Aid 7 for a listing of the states and the number of public education sections granted to each.

Public education land grants are noted on the Master Title Plat with the letters "SG" and a date. SG means state grant.


16
SG 7/10/1890

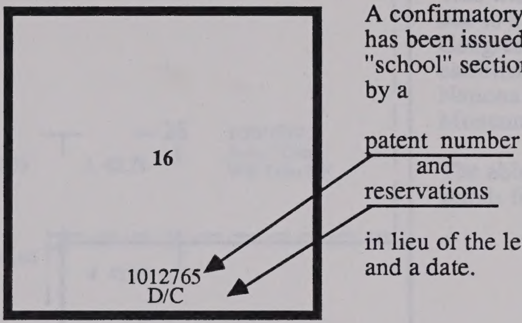
The date that follows the letters SG shows when the cadastral survey for the township was approved.

Assistance

Study Guide

Confirmatory Patent

If the school section has a patent number in lieu of the letters SG and date, then the patent was issued after June 21, 1934. Congress enacted legislation effective June 21, 1934 that provided states the right to request from the federal government a confirmatory patent for the section(s) granted for public education.



A confirmatory patent has been issued for this "school" section as shown by a

patent number
and
reservations

in lieu of the letters "SG" and a date.

Withdrawals

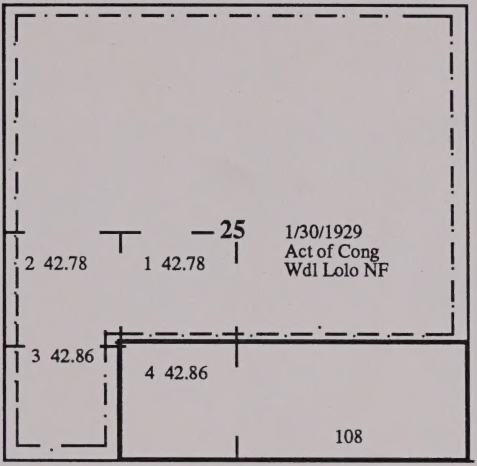
The Federal Government has the authority to withdraw land from the public domain for specific purposes. All lands that have been withdrawn are shown by the use of a dash-dot line on the Master Title Plat.

Withdrawal line —·—·—·—·—·—·—·—

Examples of withdrawn land include land for:

National Forests
Indian Reservations
Military Reservations
Reclamation Withdrawals
Power Site Classifications

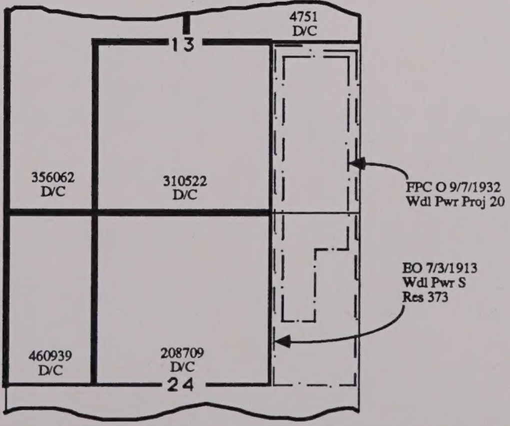
The dash-dot line in the figure below indicates that the land within the boundaries of this section (section 25) has been withdrawn by the Federal Government.


25
2 42.78
1 42.78
1/30/1929
Act of Cong
Wdl Lolo NF
3 42.86
4 42.86
108

This withdrawal was due to a 1929 Act of Congress that established the Lolo National Forest in Montana.

The abbreviation "Wdl" stands for Withdrawal.

Different withdrawals can overlap each other. The figure below illustrates an occurrence of overlapping withdrawals. In this case, a withdrawal was made for a power project (Pwr Proj 20) for the Federal Power Commission (FPC) that overlapped an earlier withdrawal for land for a power site (Pwr S Res 373) as established by a 1913 Executive Order (EO).


4751
D/C
13
356062
D/C
310522
D/C
FPC O 9/7/1932
Wdl Pwr Proj 20
EO 7/3/1913
Wdl Pwr S
Res 373
460939
D/C
208709
D/C
24

Vulcan
BINDER & COVER
Vincent, Al 35178

T. 8N., R. 3W., Sixth PM
sec 15, SE¼ SW¼ NW¼ SE¼

Legal Description and Land Status

Course Number 2000-ST-1

A SELF STUDY GUIDE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

PHOENIX
TRAINING
CENTER

BUREAU OF
LAND
MANAGEMENT

OVERVIEW

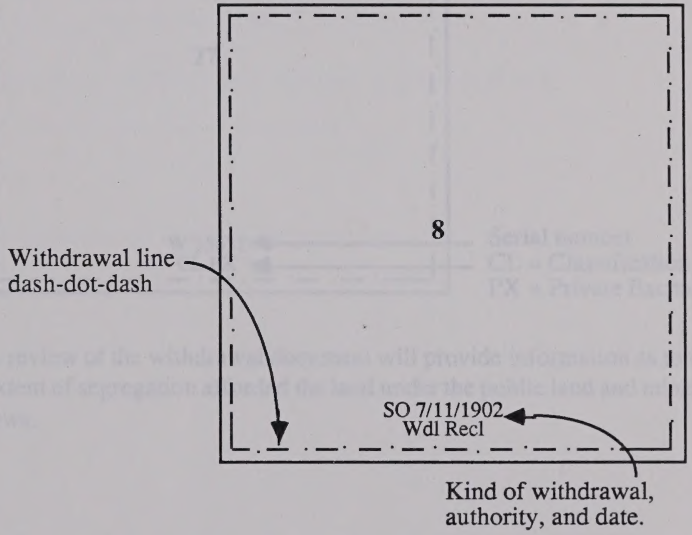
Assistance

Study Guide

Withdrawals are annotated on the Master Title Plat by various abbreviations, including:

EO meaning Executive Order
SO meaning Secretarial Order
PL meaning Public Law
PLO meaning Public Land Order
CL meaning Classification

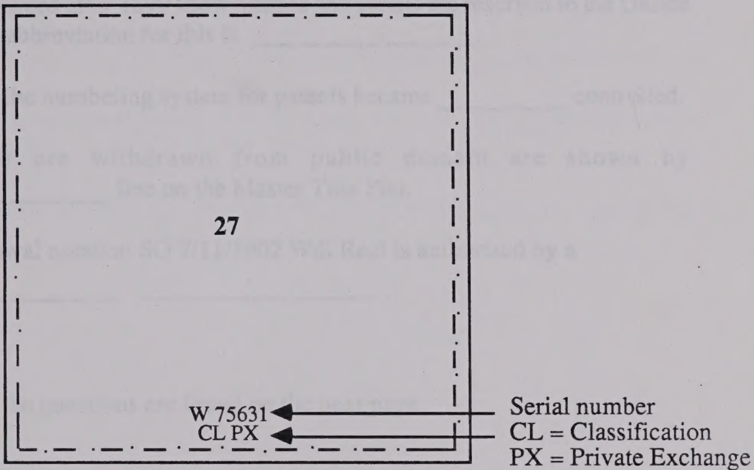
When the abbreviations EO and SO are used, they will be followed by a date indicating when the order was signed.


8
Withdrawal line dash-dot-dash
SO 7/11/1902
Wdl Recl
Kind of withdrawal, authority, and date.

Assistance

Study Guide

The letters "PL" and "PLO" have the number of the law or order following the abbreviation. The letters "CL" will be followed by an abbreviation for the type of classification under which the land was withdrawn. For example, if the letters "PX" follow letters "CL", you would know that the area within the withdrawal line is classified for a Private Exchange (PX).


27
W 75631
CL PX
Serial number
CL = Classification
PX = Private Exchange

A review of the withdrawal document will provide information as to the extent of segregation afforded the land under the public land and mineral laws.

Read and Answer Questions

Let's review what we have just covered. Answer the following questions in the space provided.

7. The __________ ___________ line is drawn regardless of whether a section is surveyed or unsurveyed.

8. All patents issued after 1890 show ditches and canals are reserved to the United States. The abbreviation for this is _________________.

9. After 1964, the numbering system for patents became __________ controlled.

10. Lands that are withdrawn from public domain are shown by _________________ line on the Master Title Plat.

11. The withdrawal notation SO 7/11/1902 Wdl Recl is authorized by a

    __________________ __________________ .

The answers to the questions are found on the next page.

Read and Answer Questions

The following are answers to the questions on page 80.

7. The survey weight line is drawn regardless of whether a section is surveyed or unsurveyed.

8. All patents issued after 1890 show ditches and canals are reserved to the United States. The abbreviation for this is D/C .

9. After 1964, the numbering system for patents became state controlled.

10. Lands that are withdrawn from public domain are shown by dash-dot line on the Master Title Plat.

11. The withdrawal notation SO 7/11/1902 Wdl Recl is authorized by a secretarial order.

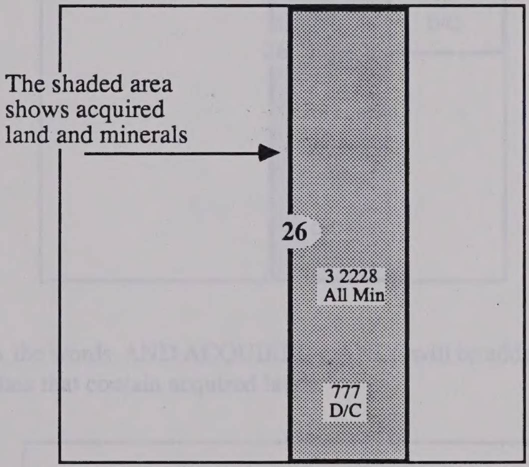
Assistance

Study Guide

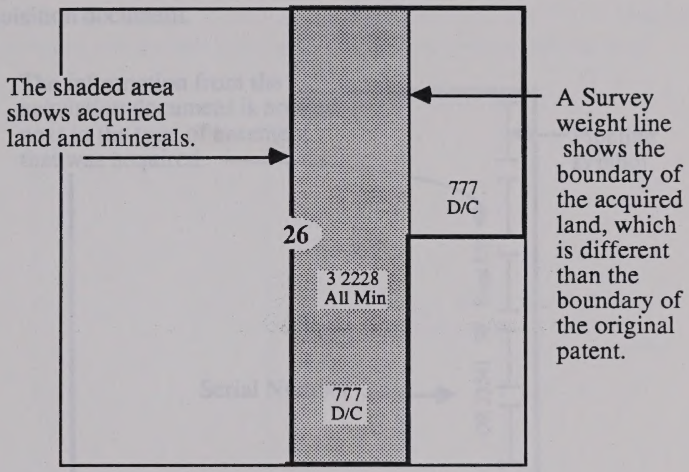
Acquired Lands

The Federal Government acquires lands and minerals that were formerly a part of the public domain. Those are called acquired lands. Acquired parcels of land or minerals are shown on the Master Title Plat by the use of a shaded dot pattern.

The notation above the original patent number indicates acquired surface only, acquired minerals only, or acquired surface and minerals. In some cases only fractional mineral interests are acquired. They will be shown by the notation "RSTD MIN," which means "restricted minerals."


The shaded area shows acquired land and minerals
26
3 2228
All Min
777
D/C

No additional lines of information are required if the area of acquisition is identified to the original patented area. If the acquired area differs in some way from the original patented area, the deviation will be shown by the use of a survey weight line.


The shaded area shows acquired land and minerals.
26
3 2228
All Min
777
D/C
777
D/C
A Survey weight line shows the boundary of the acquired land, which is different than the boundary of the original patent.

Plat Subtitle

Also, the words AND ACQUIRED LANDS will be added to the subtitle on plats that contain acquired lands.

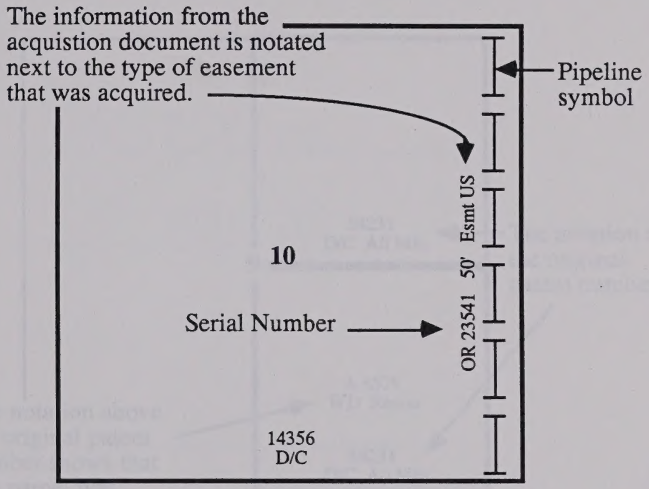
STATUS OF PUBLIC DOMAIN
LAND AND MINERAL TITLES
AND ACQUIRED LANDS

Typical subtitle indicating acquired lands

Easements

An easement is an interest or right in land owned by another that entitles its holder to a specific limited use; such as laying a sewer, crossing over property or putting up power lines.

Acquired easements are shown on the plat from the description in the acquisition document.



The information from the acquistion document is notated next to the type of easement that was acquired.

Pipeline symbol
10
Serial Number
OR 23541 50' Esmt US
14356
D/C

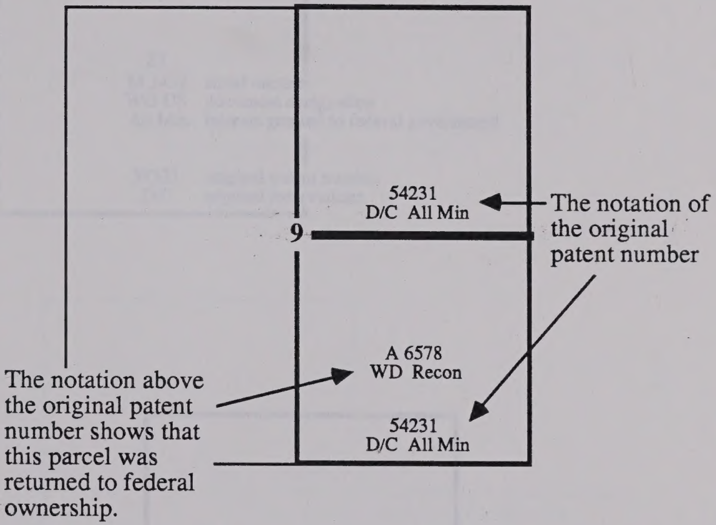
Assistance

Study Guide

Reconveyed Lands

Reconveyed lands are lands once patented or granted but later returned to federal ownership.

Reconveyed lands do not require the use of a shading pattern on the plats. When the area of reconveyance is less than the area in the original patent, the boundary will be shown with a patent weight line. The area not reconveyed will be annotated with the original patent information.

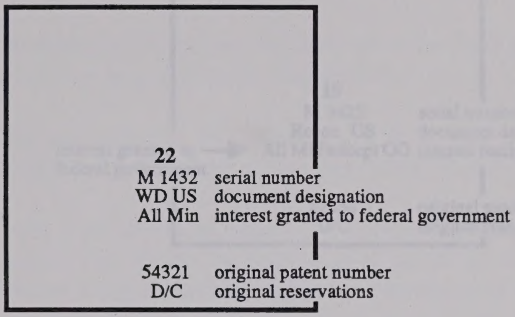

54231
D/C All Min
9
The notation of the original patent number
A 6578
WD Recon
54231
D/C All Min
The notation above the original patent number shows that this parcel was returned to federal ownership.

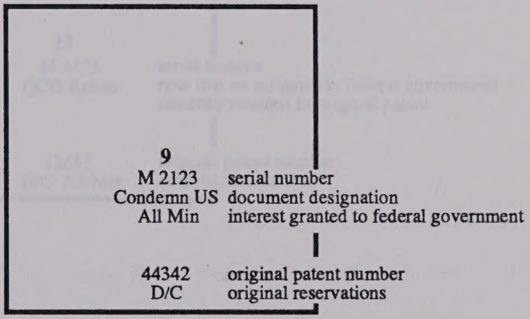
For both cases - acquired and reconveyed, the original patent lines are retained on the plats.

The notation above the original patent number shows which parcel and what right was returned to federal ownership. The serial number of the file that contains the record of the transaction will also be noted.

Sample
Acquisition
Notations

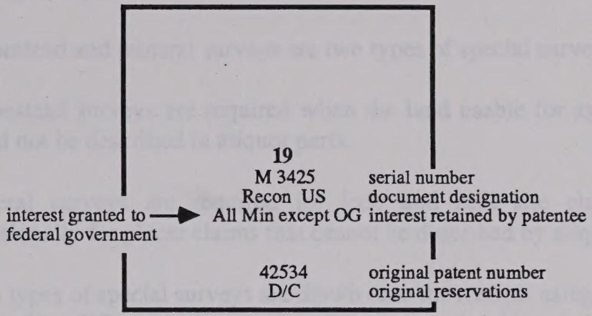
The following are some examples of typical acquisition notations:

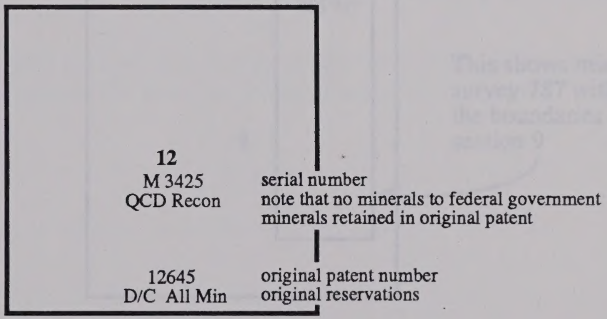

22
M 1432 serial number
WD US document designation
All Min interest granted to federal government
54321 original patent number
D/C original reservations


9
M 2123 serial number
Condemn US document designation
All Min interest granted to federal government
44342 original patent number
D/C original reservations

Sample Reconveyance Notations

The following are some examples of typical reconveyance notations:


19
M 3425
Recon US
All Min except OG
42534
D/C
serial number
document designation
interest retained by patentee
original patent number
original reservations
interest granted to federal government


12
M 3425
QCD Recon
12645
D/C All Min
serial number
note that no minerals to federal government
minerals retained in original patent
original patent number
original reservations

Assistance

Study Guide

Special Surveys

Special surveys are also noted on the Master Title Plat. Special surveys are surveys that involve unusual applications or departures from the rectangular system.

Homestead and mineral surveys are two types of special surveys.

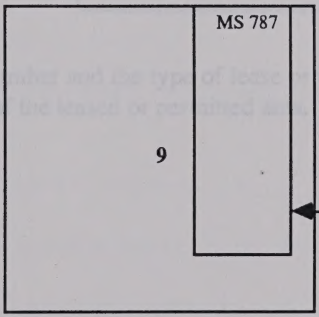
Homestead Surveys

Homestead surveys are required when the land usable for agriculture could not be described in aliquot parts.

Mineral Surveys

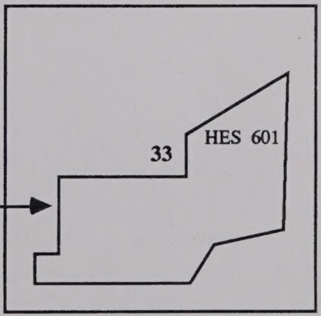
Mineral surveys are required for lode and mill site claims and occasionally for placer claims that cannot be described by aliquot parts.

Both types of special surveys are drawn onto the records using a survey weight line. Within the boundaries of the survey, the abbreviation for the survey along with the survey number is portrayed in the upper portion of the surveyed area.



This shows mineral survey 787 within the boundaries of section 9

This shows homestead survey 601 within the boundaries of section 33

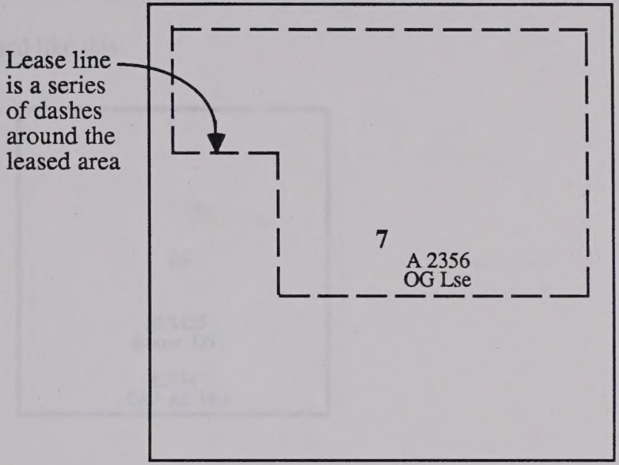


Assistance

Study Guide

Leases and Permits

When a lease or permit is shown on the Use Plat, a dash line is used.


Lease line is a series of dashes around the leased area
7
A 2356
OG Lse

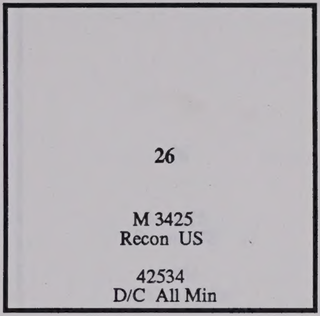
The serial number and the type of lease or permit will be shown in the lowest part of the leased or permitted area.

Read and Answer Questions

Now, as a review of this section of material, answer the following questions.

12. Acquired land is notated on a plat by __________.

13. If a document is noted like this:



the parcel of land has been ______________.

14. _________ surveys are required when the land usable for agriculture can not be described in aliquot parts.

15. Special surveys are drawn onto the records using a _____ ______ line.

16. A _____ or _____ is shown by a dash line on the Use Plat.

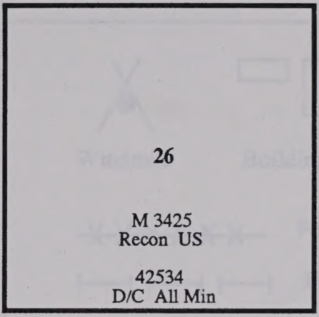
Now check your answers on the following page to see how you did!

Read and Answer Questions

The following are the answers to the questions on the previous page.

12. Acquired land is notated on a plat by a shaded dot pattern.

13. If a document is noted like this:



the parcel of land has been reconveyed.

14. Homestead surveys are required when the land usable for agriculture can not be described in aliquot parts.

15. Special surveys are drawn onto the records using a survey weight line.

16. A lease or permit is shown by a dash line on the Use Plat.

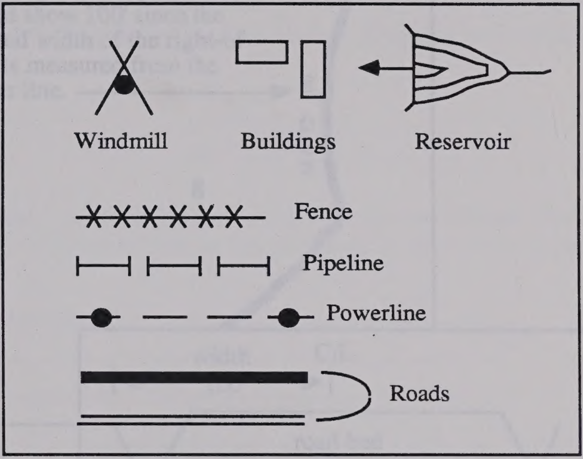
Great! now continue with the lesson.

Assistance

Symbols
Also see
Resource Aid 5
Commonly
Used Symbols

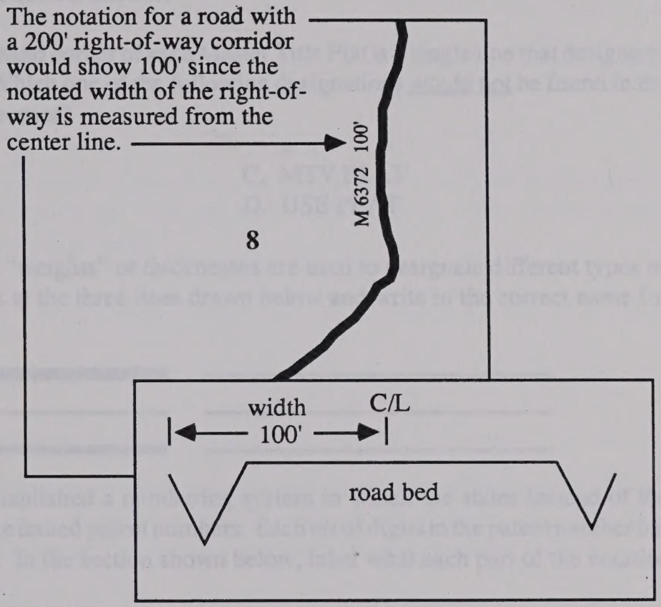
Study Guide

Symbols are used to notate physical features and realty actions. Many of the symbols used on BLM Master Title Plats differ from the symbols used by the U.S. Geologic Survey (USGS) on their topographic maps. The symbols below represent objects frequently found on BLM Master Title Plats.


Windmill
Buildings
Reservoir
Fence
Pipeline
Powerline
Roads

Right-of-Way

When a right-of-way is approved, the notation to the plat includes the serial number and one-half the width of the right-of-way corridor as measured from the center line.



The notation for a road with a 200' right-of-way corridor would show 100' since the notated width of the right-of-way is measured from the center line.

Read and Answer Questions

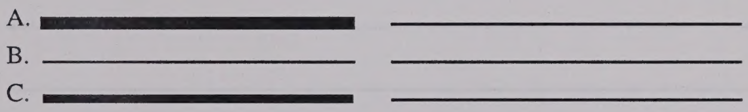
Now let's see how you've done on this section. Please answer the following review questions before moving on to Part IV. Answers can be found on the pages following the questions.

Circle or write out the correct answer.

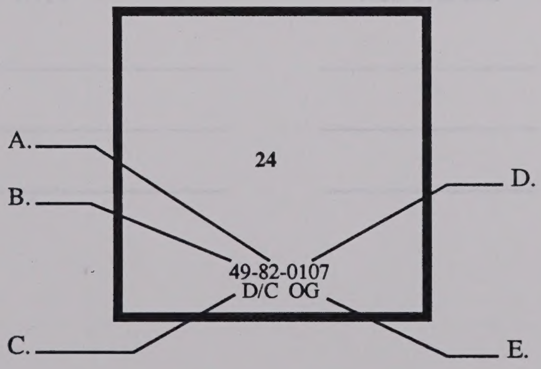
1. In the upper right hand corner of each Master Title Plat is a single line that designates the kind of plat. Which one of the following designations would not be found in the upper right hand corner?

   A. MTP SUPPL
   B. OG PLAT
   C. MTV PLAT
   D. USE PLAT

2. Lines of different "weights" or thicknesses are used to designate different types of boundaries. Look at the three lines drawn below and write in the correct name for each.



3. In 1964, BLM established a numbering system in which the states instead of the Washington Office issued patent numbers. Each set of digits in the patent number has specific meaning. In the section shown below, label what each part of the notation means.



Write answers on the following page.

Read and Answer Questions

A. ______________________________

B. ______________________________

C. ______________________________

D. ______________________________

E ______________________________

4. The federal government has the authority to withdraw land from the public domain for several different purposes. Can you name three purposes for which the federal government can withdraw land?

A. ______________________________

B. ______________________________

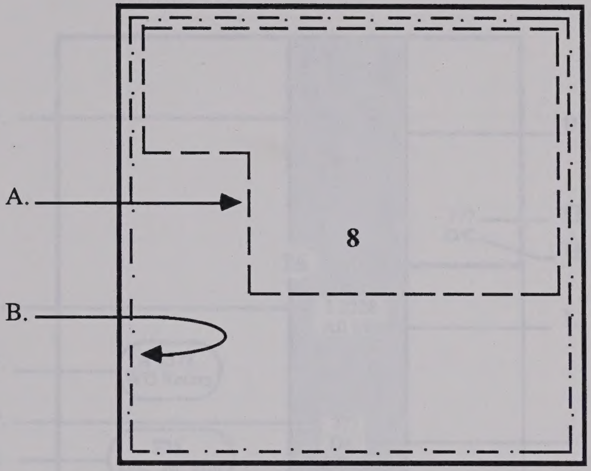
C. ______________________________

5. There are several ways in which the federal government can withdraw land. One of those ways is through an Executive Order, abbreviated EO. Can you name three other ways in which land can be withdrawn and identify the abbreviation for each.

	WAY	Abbreviation
A.	____________________	____________
B.	____________________	____________
C.	____________________	____________

Read and Answer Questions

6. The boundaries of withdrawn lands and the boundaries of leases on the public lands are shown by the use of broken lines. In the section shown below, label the lines as either boundaries for leased land or withdrawn land.

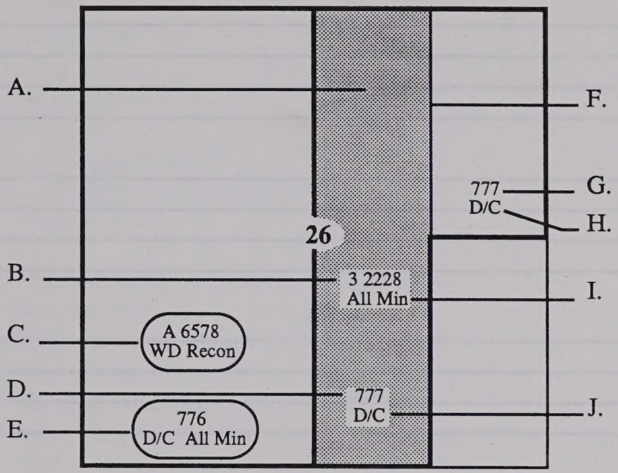


A. ____

B. ____

Read and Answer Questions

7. The federal government can acquire land and minerals that were formerly a part of the public domain as well as have reconveyed to it, lands that were a part of the public domain. What can you tell about the section shown below? This will be a pretty good test of your skill. Many of the answers will require a fairly lengthly answer.


A.
B.
C.
D.
E.
F.
G.
H.
I.
J.
26
777
D/C
3 2228
All Min
A 6578
WD Recon
777
D/C
776
D/C All Min

A. ______________________________

____

____

____

B. ______________________________

____

____

____

C. ______________________________

____

____

____

Read and Answer Questions

D. ____________________

E. ____________________

F. ____________________

G. ____________________

H. ____________________

I. ____________________

J. ____________________

Read and Answer Questions

Answers to the review questions for Part III:

1. C. MTV Plat

2. A = double weight patent line
   B = survey weight line
   C = single weight patent line

3. A = fiscal year of issuance
   B = state office code
   C = ditches and canals reserved
   D = number of patent issued during fiscal year
   E = oil and gas reserved

4. Any three of the following five answers are acceptable:
   National Forests
   Indian Reservations
   Military Reservations
   Reclamation withdrawals
   Power site withdrawals

5. Any three of the following four answers and abbreviations are acceptable:

Secretarial Order	SO
Public Law	PL
Public Land Order	PLO

6. A. Lease Line
   B. Withdrawal Line

7. A. The shaded dot pattern designates acquired land.
   B. The record number for the federal government's acquisition of the land.
   C. The W1/2 of Section 26 has been reconveyed to the federal government. The number A6578 is the serial number for the reconveyance.
   D. The number 777 is the original patent number for the area acquired and recorded under record number 3 2228.
   E. The number 776 is the original patent number. This notation shows that the federal government reserved the ditches and canals, and all minerals.
   F. This survey weight line shows the boundary of the acquired land (E 1/2 NE 1/4) which is different than the boundary of the original patent.

Read and Answer Questions

G. Shows the original patent number.
H. Shows the original reservation.
I. Shows that the federal government has acquired the mineral rights.
J. Shows that under the original patent, the federal government had reserved the right to ditches and canals only.

If this all makes sense, move on to Part IV of Lesson 2. If you have questions about the preceeding material or if you had problems answering these review questions, take time now to study the material more thoroughly.

IV. Use Plats and Supplemental Plats

In addition to the MTP there are two plats that serve special purposes. They are the Use Plat and the Supplemental Plat.

Use Plat

Use Plat

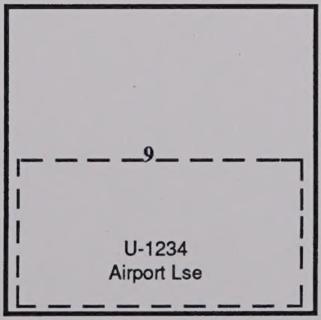
In addition to containing the same information that is on the MTP, the Use Plat is used for recording specific uses that effect the status of land and resources.

Some specific uses for which a separate use plat would be generated are:

Use	Plat Designation
R&PP lease	Use Plat
Coal lease	Coal Plat
Sodium lease	Sod Plat
Geothermal lease	Geo Plat
Oil and Gas lease	OG Plat

Two types of leases that are drafted on to both the MTP and the Use Plat are leases for recreation and public purpose (R&PP) and airport leases.

The following is an example of the notation of an airport lease:



Read and Answer Questions

At this point, answer the following questions to see how you're doing. Circle or write out your answers here:

1. The plat title OG Plat means ______________________________ .
2. The notation R&PP Lse means ______________________________.
3. Name two special purpose plats:

   ____

   ____

Answers are on the following page.

Read and Answer Questions

Here are the answers to questions 1-3. See how you did.

1. The plat title OG plat means use plat for oil and gas leases.

2. The notation R&PP means a lease has been drafted for recreation and public purpose.

3. Use Plat
   Supplemental Plat

Supplemental Plat

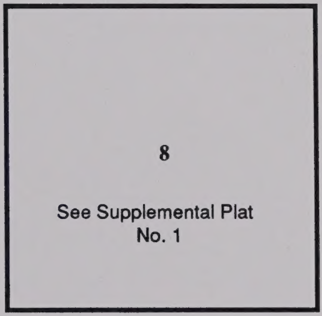
Supplemental Plat

The supplemental plat is a plat drawn to a larger scale than the MTP. It is usually drawn at a scale of 10 chains to 1 inch.

These plats are made when the information or action to be platted is in a congested area or is too complicated to show at the normal 30 chain scale.

When a plat is generated for this reason, all title and survey information will be removed from the section being supplemented. The words "See Supplemental Plat" are drafted below the section number on the MTP.

The following is an example of the notation for a supplemental plat.



Read and Answer Questions

Now to check your knowledge of supplemental plats answer the following questions:

4. Supplemental plats are used when ____
____
____.

5. The scale used on a supplemental plat generally is __________ chains to 1 inch.

6. The supplemental plat is drawn to a larger/smaller scale than the MTP.

Now check the next page to see how you're doing. If you are having problems, take time now to go over the material again.

Read and Answer Questions

See how you did on the questions about supplemental plats.

4. Supplemental plats are used when the information or action to be platted is in a congested area or is too complicated to show at the normal 30 chain scale.

5. The scale used on a supplemental plat is 10 chains to 1 inch.

6. Larger

How did you do?

Great!

Proceed to Part V of Lesson 2.

Assistance

Study Guide

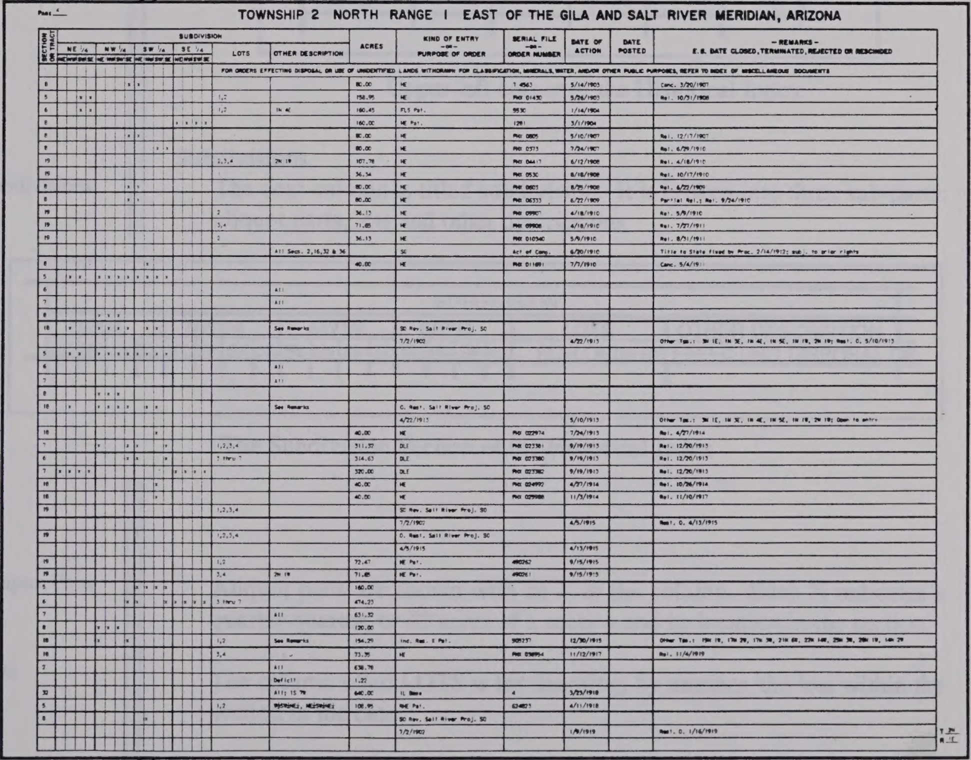
V. Historical Index

Historical Index

The Historical Index is a chronological listing of all actions that affect the use or title to public land and resources for each township. Applications are noted to the Historical Index only when they segregate the land.

It is a ledger-type document that consists of notations that elaborate on the information shown on the MTP.

There is a Historical Index for each MTP. It is placed in the plat book immediately before the MTP. The heading of the Index is identical to the heading of the MTP. The following is an example of a Historical Index.



Page 4

TOWNSHIP 2 NORTH RANGE 1 EAST OF THE GILA AND SALT RIVER MERIDIAN, ARIZONA

SECTION OR TRACT	SUBDIVISION NE ¼ NE	NE ¼ NW	NE ¼ SW	NE ¼ SE	NW ¼ NE	NW ¼ NW	NW ¼ SW	NW ¼ SE	SW ¼ NE	SW ¼ NW	SW ¼ SW	SW ¼ SE	SE ¼ NE	SE ¼ NW	SE ¼ SW	SE ¼ SE	LOTS	OTHER DESCRIPTION	ACRES	KIND OF ENTRY -OR- PURPOSE OF ORDER	SERIAL FILE -OR- ORDER NUMBER	DATE OF ACTION	DATE POSTED	-REMARKS- E.G. DATE CLOSED, TERMINATED, REJECTED OR RESCINDED
																	FOR ORDERS EFFECTING DISPOSAL OR USE OF UNIDENTIFIED LANDS WITHDRAWN FOR CLASSIFICATION, MINERALS, WATER, AND/OR OTHER PUBLIC PURPOSES, REFER TO INDEX OF MISCELLANEOUS DOCUMENTS							
8								x	x										80.00	HE	T 4563	5/14/1903		Canc. 3/20/1907
5			x	x													1,2		158.95	HE	PHX 01430	5/26/1903		Rel. 10/31/1908
6			x	x													1,2	1N 4E	160.45	FLS Pat.	9530	1/14/1904		
8													x	x	x	x			160.00	HE Pat.	1281	3/1/1904		
8								x	x										80.00	HE	PHX 0805	5/10/1907		Rel. 12/17/1907
8											x	x							80.00	HE	PHX 0373	7/24/1907		Rel. 6/29/1910
19																	2,3,4	2N 1W	107.78	HE	PHX 04417	6/12/1908		Rel. 4/18/1910
19																	1		36.34	HE	PHX 0530	8/18/1908		Rel. 10/17/1910
8								x	x										80.00	HE	PHX 0803	8/25/1908		Rel. 6/22/1909
8								x	x										80.00	HE	PHX 06333	6/22/1909		Partial Rel.; Rel. 9/24/1910
19																	2		36.13	HE	PHX 09907	4/18/1910		Rel. 5/9/1910
19																	3,4		71.65	HE	PHX 09908	4/18/1910		Rel. 7/27/1911
19																	2		36.13	HE	PHX 010340	5/9/1910		Rel. 8/31/1911
																		All Secs. 2,16,32 & 36		SG	Act of Cong.	6/20/1910		Title to State fixed by Proc. 2/14/1912; subj. to prior rights
8										x									40.00	HE	PHX 011691	7/7/1910		Canc. 5/4/1911
5		x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x												
6																		All						
7																		All						
8					x	x	x																	
18		x			x	x	x	x		x	x							See Remarks		SO Rev. Salt River Proj. SO				
																				7/2/1902		4/22/1913		Other Tps.: 3N 1E, 1N 3E, 1N 4E, 1N 5E, 1N 1W, 2N 1W; Rest. O. 5/10/1913
5		x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x												
6																		All						
7																		All						
8					x	x	x																	
18		x			x	x	x	x		x	x							See Remarks		O. Rest. Salt River Proj. SO				
																				4/22/1913		5/10/1913		Other Tps.: 3N 1E, 1N 3E, 1N 4E, 1N 5E, 1N 1W, 2N 1W; Open to entry
18											x								40.00	HE	PHX 022974	7/24/1913		Rel. 4/27/1914
7					x			x	x			x					1,2,3,4		311.32	DLE	PHX 023381	9/19/1913		Rel. 12/20/1913
6								x	x			x					3 thru 7		314.63	DLE	PHX 023380	9/19/1913		Rel. 12/20/1913
7	x	x	x	x									x	x	x	x			320.00	DLE	PHX 023382	9/19/1913		Rel. 12/20/1913
18											x								40.00	HE	PHX 024992	4/27/1914		Rel. 10/26/1914
18											x								40.00	HE	PHX 025988	11/3/1914		Rel. 11/10/1917
19																	1,2,3,4			SO Rev. Salt River Proj. SO				
																				7/2/1907		4/5/1915		Rest. O. 4/13/1915
19																	1,2,3,4			O. Rest. Salt River Proj. SO				
																				4/5/1915		4/13/1915		
19																	1,2		72.47	HE Pat.	490262	9/15/1915		
19																	3,4	2N 1W	71.65	HE Pat.	490261	9/15/1915		
5									x	x	x	x							160.00					
6								x	x			x	x	x	x	x	3 thru 7		474.23					
7																		All	631.32					
8					x	x	x												120.00					
18					x			x									1,2	See Remarks	154.29	Ind. Res. X Pat.	905237	12/30/1915		Other Tps.: 19N 1W, 17N 2W, 17N 3W, 21N 6W, 22N 14W, 25N 3W, 20N 1W, 14N 2W
18																	3,4		73.35	HE	PHX 038954	11/12/1917		Rel. 11/4/1919
2																		All	638.70					
																		Deficit	1.22					
32																		All; 1S 7W	640.00	IL Base	4	3/23/1918		
5																	1,2	[illegible]	108.95	SHE Pat.	634823	4/11/1918		
8										x										SO Rev. Salt River Proj. SO				
																				7/2/1902		1/9/1919		Rest. O. 1/16/1919

T 2N
R 1E

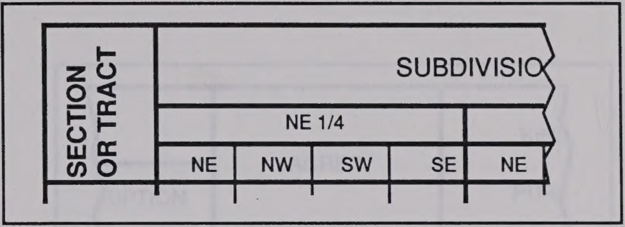
Index Columns

The Historical Index consists of a series of columns for entering land status information for the township. We will explain the columns starting with the left hand column.

Section or Tract

Section or Tract

The first column lists the section(s) or tract number(s) involved in a case. When a case involves multiple sections, each section number is listed on a separate line in numerical sequence.

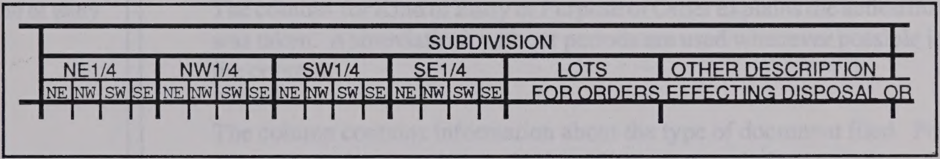

SECTION OR TRACT
SUBDIVISIO
NE 1/4
NE
NW
SW
SE
NE

Upper left corner of the Historical Index

Subdivisions

Subdivisions

The next column is titled subdivision. It is broken into three sub-parts: aliquot parts, lots and other descriptions.


SUBDIVISION
NE1/4
NW1/4
SW1/4
SE1/4
LOTS
OTHER DESCRIPTION
NE NW SW SE
NE NW SW SE
NE NW SW SE
NE NW SW SE
FOR ORDERS EFFECTING DISPOSAL OR

The Subdivision Section of the Historical Index

Aliquot Parts

Aliquot parts are shown with an X in the column. Each X indicates a quarter-quarter, or 40 acres of a section and its location in the section.

Lots

The column titled LOTS is for denoting, by number, the lots within the section in the case.

Assistance

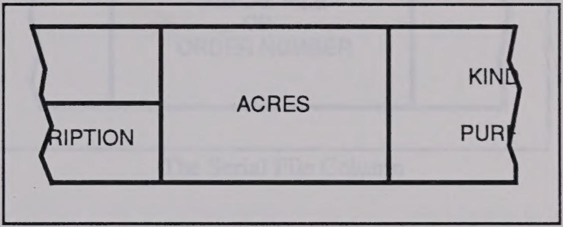
Study Guide

Other Descriptions

The column titled OTHER DESCRIPTION may contain the following information:

a) see remarks
b) Land descriptions which do not fit into aliquot parts or the lots column.
c) A key township or other township citation.
d) The word All referring to the section notation.

Acres



The Acres Column

Acres

The acres column is a column for acreage of the case for the township.

Kind of Entry or Purpose of Order

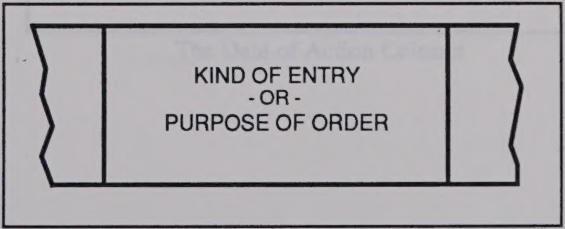
Kind of Entry

The column for Kind of Entry or Purpose of Order explains the action that was taken. Abbreviations without periods are used whenever possible in the column.

Abbreviations See Resource Aid 5

The column contains information about the type of document filed. For example, such abbreviations in the column may include:

ST Pat	Small Tract Patent
HE Pat	Homestead Entry Patent
CE Pat	Cash Entry Patent
OG Lse	Oil and Gas Lease
PX Apln	Private Exchange Application

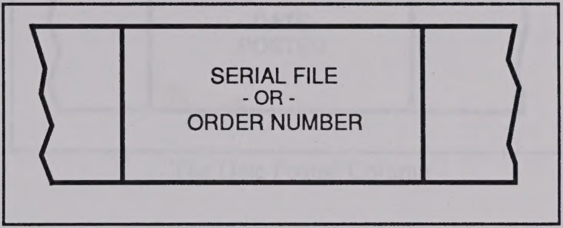


The Kind of Entry Column

Serial File or Order Number

Serial File or Order Number

The next column is titled Serial File or Order Number. This column contains the patent number on title transfers from the U.S., warranty deed identifications and reconveyed lands. It also shows the order numbering when they are numbered.

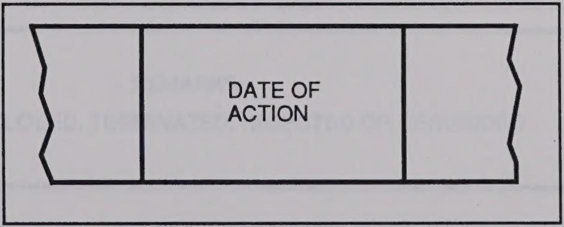


The Serial File Column

Date of Action

Date of Action

The next column shows the date of action in chronological order. This date is the date the document was signed. When the order or document is not numbered then the date is used as the document identification. If two or more entries have the same date, enter them in document number order.



The Date of Action Column

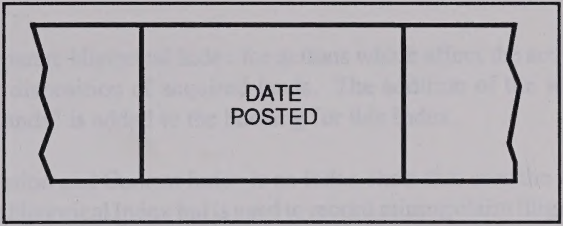
Assistance

Study Guide

Date Posted

Date Posted

The date posted column is used only if the date is pertinent to the case action, such as termination actions.



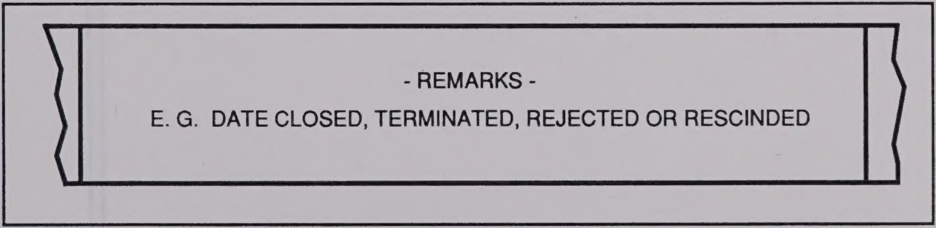
The Date Posted Column

Remarks

Remarks

The last column titled remarks contains miscellaneous information about the case. Notations of closings, terminations and rejections of the case will be cited here.

Also, information that was too extensive to be entered in other columns such as -- metes and bounds descriptions, lengthy aliquot parts descriptions, segregations and other land descriptions when the "other descriptions" column contains the notation "see remarks." The serial number of the case may also appear in this column.



The Remarks Column

Assistance

Study Guide

Some other things about the Historical Index:

The Historical Index data is read from the back (latest) to the front (earliest) and from the bottom of the page (latest) to the top of the page (earliest).

There is a separate Historical Index for actions which affect the acquisition, uses or disposition of acquired lands. The addition of the words "Acquired Lands" is added to the heading for this Index.

Mineral Location and Contest Index is an index sheet that uses the same format as the Historical Index but is used to record mining claim litigation and contest actions.

Read and Answer Questions

Now let's take some time to see if you got all of that. Answer the following questions to test your knowledge.

1. The Historical Index is a chronological listing of all actions that affect ______________________________.

2. Which of the following is not a column heading in the Historical Index:
   A) Acres
   B) Date Received
   C) Kind of Entry
   D) Tract or Section

3. An abbreviation of OG Lse in the "Kind of Entry" column stands for ______________________.

4. The serial file or order number column in the Historical Index contains the ____________________ number on title transfers.

Check your answers on the following page.

Read and Answer Questions

The following are the answers to the questions about the Historical Index found on page113.

See how you did!

1. The Historical Index is a chronological listing of all actions that affect the use or title to public land and resources for each township.

2. B) Date Received

3. An abbreviation of OG Lse in the "Kind of Entry" column stands for oil and gas lease.

4. The serial file or order number column in the Historical Index contains the patent number on title transfers.

Great! Now go on to Section VI on the Control Document Index.

Assistance

Study Guide

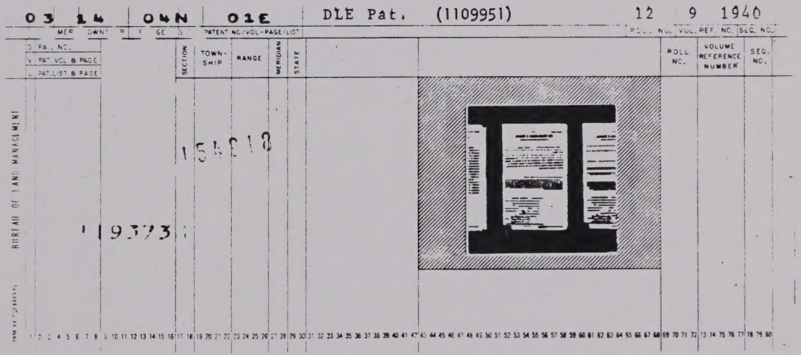
VI. Control Document Index

Aperture Cards

The control document index is a file of 35mm microfilm images mounted in aperture cards.

The images are copies of the original patents and other documents which conveyed title or interest in lands from or to the United States. The control document index also contains copies of public laws, proclamations, withdrawals which affect or have affected the right or title to use of public land.

The following is an example.



03 14 | 04N | 01E | DLE Pat. (1109951) | 12 9 1940

MER
OWN
GE
PATENT NO/VOL-PAGE/LIST
ROLL NO.
VOL. REF. NO.
SEQ. NO.
S PAT. NO.
V PAT. VOL & PAGE
L PAT. LIST & PAGE
SECTION
TOWNSHIP
RANGE
MERIDIAN
STATE
ROLL NO.
VOLUME REFERENCE NUMBER
SEQ. NO.
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
19373

The aperture cards are filed by range and township, and in chronological order by the actions occurrence within the township.

Read and Answer Questions

The following are questions to see how you did on Section VI, Control Document Index.

1. The Control Document Index is 35mm microfilm mounted on ____________________________.

2. Which of the following does the control document index not contain?
   A) Copies of original patents
   B) Public laws affecting right or title to the land
   C) Right of way grant.

3. Aperture cards are filed by ____________ and by __________ in chronological order by the action's occurrence within the township.

Read and Answer Questions

Here are the answers to Section VI's questions on the Control Document Index.. See how you did.

1. The control document index is 35mm microfilm mounted on aperture cards.

2. C) Right of way grant

3. Aperture cards are filed by range and by township in chronological order by the action's occurrence within the township.

How did you do? If you got it all, go on to the next part. If you still aren't sure, go back and reread the material to clarify your questions.

Index to Miscellaneous Documents

VII. Index to Miscellaneous Documents

This index contains a chronological listing of public laws, acts of Congress, and Presidential orders. The listed documents are those that apply to lands not specifically described on which conditions may exist that would restrict the disposal or use of lands.

This index is usually placed in the front of every plat book or if microfilmed, it is often kept with the Control Document Index.

Serial Register Page

VIII. Serial Register Page

The serial register page is an individual document that contains:

- — applicant's name
- — applicant's address
- — type of case
- — legal descriptions
- — and other information pertinent to the case.

This chronological record of the case is kept whether or not the transaction resulted in the disposal or authorization to use the public lands involved.

Each transaction is identified by a serial number that has been assigned to it.

Serial Number

C-30156

Typical Serial Number from
Serial Register Page

Assistance

Study Guide

Serial Numbers

The serial numbers are given to each transaction in sequential order. These numbers also contain one or two letters that show the issuing state or office.

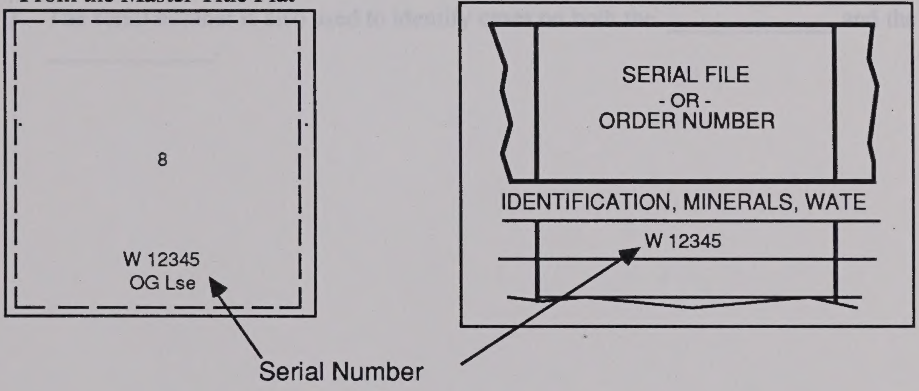
For example:

C-12345 is a serial number for Colorado and CA-5432 is a serial number for California.

The serial number found in the register is also used to identify cases on both the Master Title Plats and the Historical Index.

From the Master Title Plat

From the Historical Index


8
W 12345
OG Lse
SERIAL FILE
- OR -
ORDER NUMBER
IDENTIFICATION, MINERALS, WATE
W 12345
Serial Number

Serial Prefixes

When reading the plats and indices you may find other serial prefixes that have been discontinued but are still used to identify cases that show on the records.

Some examples may include:

Serial Prefix	Office
CC	Central City or Carson City
GLO	General Land Office
H	Humboldt
PHX	Phoenix

Read and Answer Questions

Now lets see how you did on the part of the Serial Register Page. Answer the questions on this page.

1. True or False
   Records of each case are kept in the serial register page whether or not the transaction resulted in disposal or authorization to use public lands.
2. The serial numbers are issued in:
   A) Chronological order
   B) Sequential order
   C) Random order

3. The serial number is also used to identify cases on both the ______________ and the ______________.

Read and Answer Questions

Here are the answers to the questions on page 120.

1. True

2. B) Sequential order

3. The serial number is also used to identify cases on both the Master Title Plat and the Historical Index.

LESSON 3

THE FINAL EXERCISE

Note:

The Final Exercise has been designed to incorporate all of the objectives from the first two lessons into a practical application of legal description and land status skills.

The graphics prepared for Lesson 3 will appear slightly different than those prepared for Lessons 1 and 2. The biggest difference will be in the depiction of the weight lines. The differences allow for the same graphics to be used in the video tape and in the study guide. The need for the use of same graphics in both the video and the study guide will become apparent as you work through this lesson.

Read and Answer Questions

Legal Description and Land Status Records
Final Review Questions

Please use the following questions as a final review to this self-study package. Mark your answers in the space provided. After you complete these questions, the last portion of the video tape will provide you with the answers and explanations.

1. Early surveys were done using what method of survey?
   ____
2. How many principal meridians have been established? ____________
3. What survey monuments are set at one mile intervals? ____________
4. Tract surveys are numbered starting with what number? ____________
5. Explain the meaning of the omission or insertion of a comma in legal descriptions.
   with a comma means ______________________________
   no comma means ______________________________
6. Name 3 situations or conditions that would result in the lotting of a section.
   ____
   ____
   ____

Read and Answer Questions

7. Using diagram A, describe the shaded areas in the following sections.

sec. 19 __________________________________

sec. 20 __________________________________

sec. 21 __________________________________

sec. 28 __________________________________

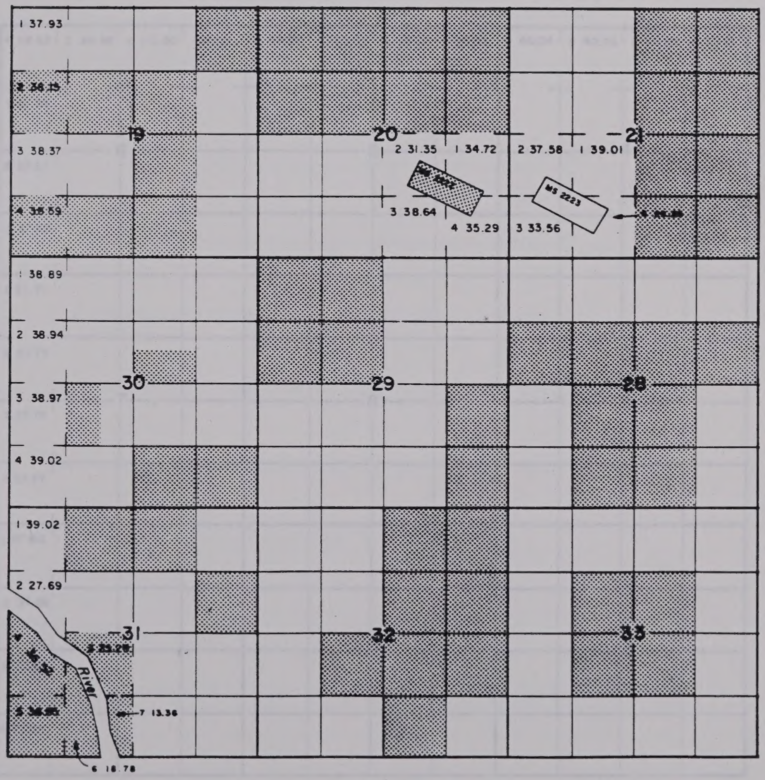
sec. 29 __________________________________

sec. 30 __________________________________

sec. 31 __________________________________

sec. 32 __________________________________

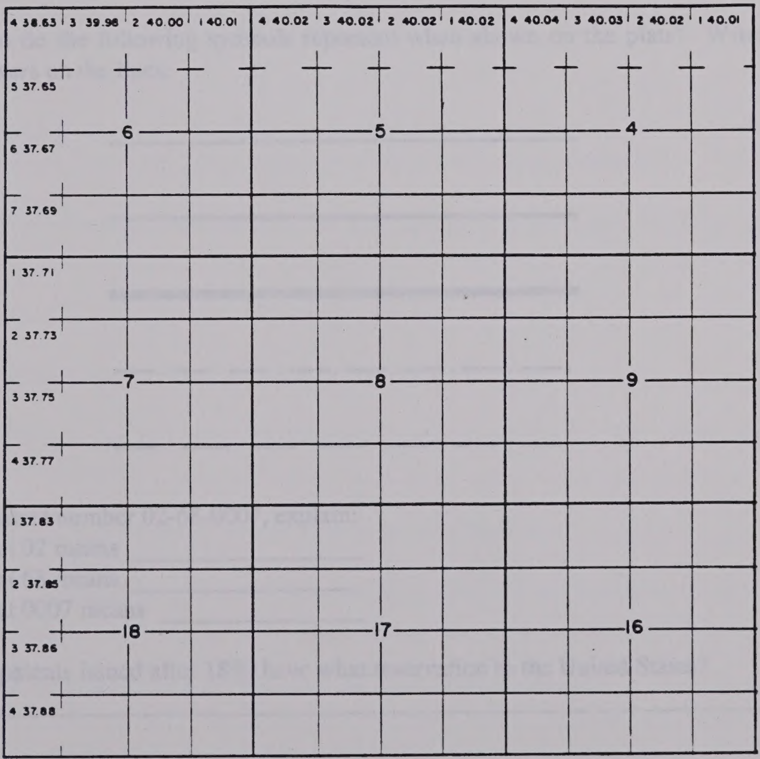
sec. 33 __________________________________


1 37.93
2 38.15
3 38.37
4 38.59
19
20
2 31.35
1 34.72
2 37.58
1 39.01
21
MS 2222
MS 2223
3 38.64
4 35.29
3 33.56
1 38.89
2 38.94
3 38.97
4 39.02
30
29
28
1 39.02
2 27.69
31
32
33
River
5 38.85
7 13.36
6 18.78

Read and Answer Questions

8. Using diagram B, color in the following legal descriptions within the section.

sec. 4, SW 1/4;
sec. 5, lots 1-4 inclusive, S 1/2 NW 1/4, W 1/2 SE 1/4;
sec. 6, lots 5, 6, 7, SE 1/4 NW 1/4, E 1/2 SW 1/4, SE 1/4 SE 1/4;
sec. 7, E 1/2 NW 1/4, SE 1/4;
sec. 8, S 1/2 N 1/2, S 1/2 S1/2;
sec. 9, N 1/2 N 1/2, SW 1/4 NE 1/4, SE 1/4 NW 1/4;
sec. 16, All;
sec. 17, SW 1/4 NE 1/4, SE 1/4 NW 1/4, NE 1/4 SW 1/4, NW 1/4 SE 1/4;
sec. 18, NE 1/4, E 1/2 SE 1/4;


4 38.63
3 39.98
2 40.00
1 40.01
4 40.02
3 40.02
2 40.02
1 40.02
4 40.04
3 40.03
2 40.02
1 40.01
5 37.65
6
5
4
6 37.67
7 37.69
1 37.71
2 37.73
7
8
9
3 37.75
4 37.77
1 37.83
2 37.85
18
17
16
3 37.86
4 37.88

Read and Answer Questions

9. Name the six major parts of the current land status record system.

____

____

____

____

____

____

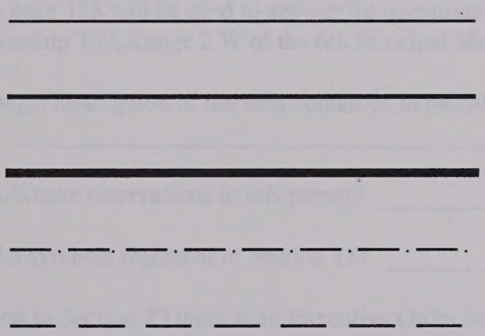
10. In 1800, what record system was established by an Act of Congress?

____

11. What are the numbers of the sections granted to the states for school purposes?

__________ __________ __________ __________

12. What do the following symbols represent when shown on the plats? Write the answers on the lines.



13. In patent number 02-68-0007, explain:
What 02 means ______________
What 68 means ______________
What 0007 means ______________

14. All patents issued after 1890 have what reservation to the United States?

____

LESSON 3: Final Exercise

Read and Answer Questions

15. List four specific uses for which a separate Use Plat is generated.

____

____

____

____

16. What type of actions are listed on the Historical Index? ____________________

17. Where is the Historical Index usually located?

____

18. The correct way to read the Historical Index is "from the ____________ to the ____________ and from the ____________ to the ____________ of the page.

19. Where can you find the Index to Miscellaneous Documents?

____

20. Diagram C on page 128 will be used to answer the questions a-l.
Portion of Township 1 N, Range 2 W of the 6th Principal Meridian has been used.

a. Write the legal description of the land contained in patent no. 127765.

____

b. Does the US have reservations in this patent? ____________________

c. What do the symbols represent in Section 11? ____________________

d. The notation in Section 23 there is an Executive Order No. 956. What was the EO made for? ____________________

e. What sections are involved in this Executive Order? ____________________

f. In Section 15 what was the right-of-way granted for and what is the R/W width?

____

g. In Sections 10 and 15, what type of lease has been issued?

____

Read and Answer Questions

h. Does the Federal Government own the minerals on the N 1/2 of Section 11? ____________________

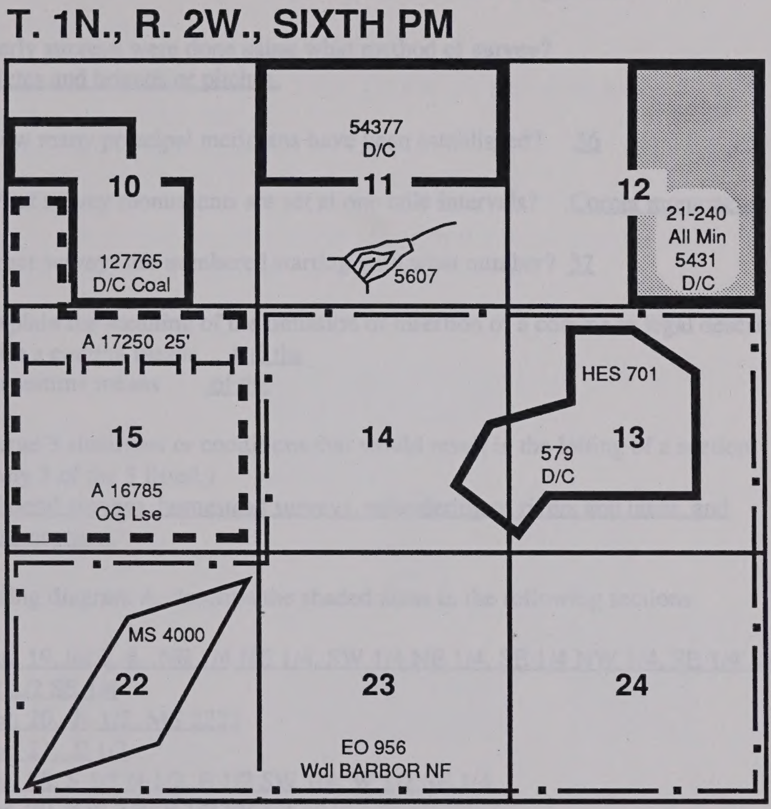
i. Does the Federal Government own the minerals in Section 24? Who manages the surface rights? ____________________

j. What estate has the United States acquired in the E 1/2 of Section 12? ____________________

k. Is MS 4000 in Section 22 patented? ____________________

l. Is HES 701 patented? ____________________

Read and Answer Questions


T. 1N., R. 2W., SIXTH PM

10
127765
D/C Coal
54377
D/C
11
5607
12
21-240
All Min
5431
D/C
A 17250 25'
15
A 16785
OG Lse
14
HES 701
13
579
D/C
MS 4000
22
23
EO 956
Wdl BARBOR NF
24

After you have finished writing your answers, view the Answers to the Final Exercise segment of the video tape. If the video tape is not available, the written answers can be found starting on the next page.

IMPORTANT NOTE: After you have finished working through this guide, locate the evaluation form in the Overview Section, complete the form, and follow the directions on the form for returning it to your training officer and the Phoenix Training Center.

Read and Answer Questions

Legal Description and Land Status Records
Final Review Answers to Questions

1. Early surveys were done using what method of survey?
   Metes and bounds or pitches.

2. How many principal meridians have been established? 36

3. What survey monuments are set at one mile intervals? Corner monuments

4. Tract surveys are numbered starting with what number? 37

5. Explain the meaning of the omission or insertion of a comma in legal descriptions.
   with a comma means and the
   no comma means of the

6. Name 3 situations or conditions that would result in the lotting of a section. (Any 3 of the 5 listed.)
   Mineral surveys, homestead surveys, meandering of rivers and lakes, and convergence.

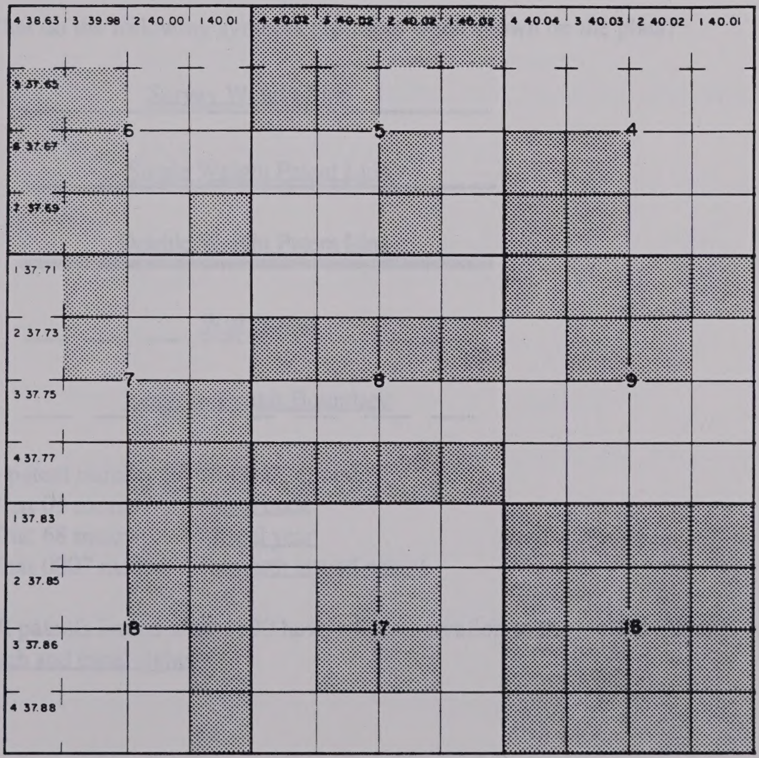
7. Using diagram A, describe the shaded areas in the following sections.

   sec. 19, lot 2, 4, NE 1/4 NE 1/4, SW 1/4 NE 1/4, SE 1/4 NW 1/4, SE 1/4 SW 1/4, W 1/2 SE 1/4
   sec. 20, N 1/2, MS 2222
   sec. 21, E 1/2
   sec. 28, S 1/2 N 1/2, E 1/2 SW 1/4, W 1/2 SE 1/4
   sec. 29, NW 1/4, E 1/2 SE 1/4
   sec. 30, S 1/2 SW 1/4 NE 1/4, W 1/2 NE 1/4 SW 1/4, S 1/2 SE 1/4
   sec. 31, lot 3-7 inclusive, NW 1/4 NE 1/4, SE 1/4 NE 1/4, NE 1/4 NW 1/4
   sec. 32, NE 1/4, NE 1/4 SW 1/4, N 1/2 SE 1/4, SW 1/4 SE 1/4
   sec. 33, SW 1/4 NE 1/4, SE 1/4 NW 1/4, NE 1/4 SW 1/4, NW 1/4 SE 1/4

Read and Answer Questions

8. Using diagram B, color in the following legal descriptions within the section.

sec. 4, SW 1/4;
sec. 5, lots 1-4 inclusive, S 1/2 NW 1/4, W 1/2 SE 1/4;
sec. 6, lots 5, 6, 7, SE 1/4 NW 1/4, E 1/2 SW 1/4, SE 1/4 SE 1/4;
sec. 7, E 1/2 NW 1/4, SE 1/4;
sec. 8, S 1/2 N 1/2, S 1/2 S1/2;
sec. 9, N 1/2 N 1/2, SW 1/4 NE 1/4, SE 1/4 NW 1/4;
sec. 16, All;
sec. 17, SW 1/4 NE 1/4, SE 1/4 NW 1/4, NE 1/4 SW 1/4, NW 1/4 SE 1/4;
sec. 18, NE 1/4, E 1/2 SE 1/4;


4 38.63
3 39.98
2 40.00
1 40.01
4 40.02
3 40.02
2 40.02
1 40.02
4 40.04
3 40.03
2 40.02
1 40.01
5 37.63
6 37.67
7 37.69
1 37.71
2 37.73
3 37.75
4 37.77
1 37.83
2 37.85
3 37.86
4 37.88
6
5
4
7
8
9
18
17
16

LESSON 3: Final Exercise

Read and Answer Questions

9. Name the six major parts of the current land status record system.
   Master Title Plat
   Use Plats
   Historical Index
   Control Document Index
   Index to Miscellaneous Documents
   Serial Register Page

10. In 1800, what record system was established by an Act of Congress?
    Tract Book System

11. What are the numbers of the sections granted to the states for school purposes?
    2 16 32 36

12. What do the following symbols represent when shown on the plats?

    Survey Weight Line

    Single Weight Patent Line

    Double Weight Patent Line

    Withdrawal

    Lease or Permit Boundary

13. In patent number 02-68-0007, explain:
    What 02 means state code
    What 68 means fiscal year
    What 0007 means seventh issued patent

14. All patents issued after 1890 have what reservation to the United States?
    ditch and canal rights

Read and Answer Questions

15. List four specific uses for which a separate Use Plat is generated. (Any 4 of the 7 listed.)

coal	potassium
sodium	phosphate
oil and gas	bituminous
geothermal	

16. What type of actions are listed on the Historical Index? use or title

17. Where is the Historical Index usually located?
In the plat book in front of the Master Title Plat.

18. The correct way to read the Historical Index is "from the latest to the earliest and from the bottom to the top of the page.

19. Where can you find the Index to Miscellaneous Documents?
In the front of every plat book or if microfilmed, with the Control Document Index.

20. Diagram C will be used to answer the questions a-l.
Portion of Township 1 N, Range 2 W of the 6th Principal Meridian has been used.

a. Write the legal description of the land contained in patent no. 127765.
T. 1N., R.2W., SIXTH PM, sec.10, S 1/2 NW 1/4, E 1/2 SW 1/4, W 1/2 SE 1/4

b. Does the US have reservations in this patent? Yes

c. What does the symbol represent in Section 11? reservoir

d. The notation in Section 23 there is an Executive Order No. 956. What was the EO made for? national forest withdrawal

e. What sections are involved in this Executive Order? 13, 14, 22, 23, 24

f. In Section 15 what was the right-of-way granted for and what is the R/W width?
pipeline, 50 feet

g. In Sections 10 and 15, what type of lease has been issued? oil and gas lease

h. Does the Federal Government own the minerals on the N 1/2 of Section 11? No

Read and Answer Questions

i. Does the Federal Government own the minerals in Section 24? Who manages the surface rights? Yes. U.S. Forest Service

j. What estate has the United States acquired in the E 1/2 of Section 12? Surface rights and all mineral rights

k. Is MS 4000 in Section 22 patented? No

l. Is HES 701 patented? Yes

RESOURCE

AIDS

Vulcan
BINDER & COVER
Vincent, Al 35178

RESOURCE

AIDS

RESOURCE AID

1

GLOSSARY OF PUBLIC LAND TERMS

This glossary has been prepared to assist the employee giving the general meaning and is not meant to conflict with those in other glossaries.

A

ACCEPTED SURVEY: A survey for which the plat has been accepted for the Director by the officer having Cadastral Survey approval authority.

ACCESS TRANSPORTATION AND RIGHTS-OF-WAY (ATROW): The Bureau's program for acquisition of rights-of-way.

ACCRETION: The gradual and imperceptible accumulation of land, by natural causes, along the banks of a stream or lake.

ACQUIRED LAND: Lands in Federal ownership which were obtained by the Government through purchase, condemnation, gift, or by exchange.

ACRE: A unit of area measurement. An acre equals 10 square chains or 43,560 square feet. 640 acres equal 1 square mile.

ADJUDICATE: The legal processing of applications, entries, claims, etc., to assure compliance with the public land laws and the regulations. To judicially determine, judge, or decree. To sit in judgment.

ADMINISTRATIVE SITE: Lands used as a headquarters or administrative facility by a Federal agency.

AIR NAVIGATION SITE: A reservation of public lands for air navigation purposes.

AIRPORT LEASE: A lease authorizing the use of public lands for airport or aviation purposes.

ALASKA NATIVE CLAIMS SETTLEMENT ACT (ANCSA): The Act of December 18, 1971, which provides for the settlement of aboriginal land claims of the natives and native groups in Alaska.

ALIQUOT PARTS: Legal subdivisions, except fractional lots, by an even division of land into quarters or halves leaving no remainder.

ALLOTMENT (Indian or Native): An allocation to a native of land of which he had made substantially continuous use and occupancy for a period of 5 years and which shall be deemed the "homestead" of the allottee and his heirs in perpetuity, and shall be inalienable and non-taxable except as otherwise provided by the Congress.

ALLOWED APPLICATION: An application to acquire title to public lands, which has been accepted and approved.

ANGLE POINT: A point in a survey where the alignment or boundary deflects from a straight line.

APPEAL: A process of civil law origin that entirely removes a controversy to an appellate court for the purpose of obtaining review and possible retrial.

APPLICANT: The individual or legal entity applying for use of, rights in, or title to public lands or resources.

APPLICATION: An acceptable formal request for rights in use of, or eventual title to, public lands or resources.

APPROPRIATION OR APPROPRIATED: Public lands covered by an entry, settlement, claim, location, classifications, withdrawal or reservation that sets the land apart for some particular use or disposal.

APPROVED SURVEY: The approved field notes and plat of a cadastral survey.

AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN (ACEC): Areas within the public lands where special management attention is required to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important resources.

ASSESSMENT WORK: Work required to be performed annually by the claimant, in order for him to maintain a possessory right to a mining claim for which a patent has not issued.

ASSIGNEE: A recipient or grantee. One to whom an interest is given or transferred, usually in writing.

ASSIGNMENT: A transfer or a making over to another of a whole or a part of property, either real or personal, or the giving to another of a right.

ASSIGNOR: A person who assigns a right.

AUXILIARY GUIDE MERIDIAN: Where guide meridians have been placed at intervals exceeding the distance of 24 miles, and new governing lines are required, a new guide meridian is established, and a local name is assigned, such as "Twelfth Auxiliary Guide Meridian West," or "Grass Valley Guide Meridian." Auxiliary guide meridians are surveyed, in the same manner as guide meridians.

AUXILIARY STANDARD PARALLEL: Where standard parallels have been placed at intervals exceeding the distance of 24 miles, and conditions require additional standard lines, an intermediate correction line is established, and a local name is assigned, such as "Fifth Auxiliary Standard Parallel North." Auxiliary standard parallels are surveyed, in the same manner as standard parallels.

AZIMUTH: The horizontal direction reckoned clockwise from the meridian plane.

B

BANK: The continuous margin along a river or stream where all upland vegetation ceases.

BASE LANDS: In an exchange, the lands owned by the proponent; in a lieu selection, the lands to which the applicant relinquishes or has relinquished rights, or has lost rights through no fault of his/her own.

BASE LINE: In cadastral survey, a line which runs in an east-west direction from an initial point.

BEARING: A bearing is identified by naming the end of the meridian from which it is reckoned, either north or south, and the direction of that reckoning, either east or west. Thus, a line in the northeast quadrant making an angle of 50¯ from the reference meridian will have bearing of N.50¯E.

BOARD OF LAND APPEALS: Under the direction of a Board chairman, the board exercises jurisdiction over cases involving appeals from decisions rendered by departmental officials relating to the use and disposition of public lands and their resources and the use and disposition of mineral resources in certain acquired lands and in the submerged lands of the Outer Continental Shelf.

BOUNDARY LINE: A line along which two areas meet. A boundary line between privately owned parcels of land is usually termed a property line. If a boundary is a line of the United States public land surveys, it is given a particular designation, such as section line or township line.

BOUNDARY MONUMENT: A material object placed on or near a boundary line to preserve and identify the location of the boundary line on the ground.

C

CADASTRAL SURVEY: A survey which creates, makes, defines, retraces, or re-establishes boundaries and subdivisions of the public land of the United States.

CADASTRAL SURVEYOR: One who executes cadastral surveys.

CARDINAL DIRECTIONS: True north, south, east, or west.

CASH ENTRY: Lands for which the entryman paid cash or its equivalent.

CENTERLINE: The line connecting opposite corresponding quarter corners or opposite subdivision-of-section corners or their theoretical positions. Applied to a street, right-of-way or any other strip of land of uniform width "centerline" defines the line midway between the side lines of said strip.

CHAIN: The unit of length prescribed by law for the survey of the public lands of the United States. The chain is equivalent to 66 feet or 4 rods, poles or perches, 10 square chains equals one acre.

CLAIMANT: An individual or other entity asserting title to or rights in public lands.

CLASSIFICATION: The authority of the Secretary to examine land to see whether it is proper for entry, selection, or location.

CLASSIFICATION OF LANDS: The process of determining whether the lands are more valuable or suitable for transfer or use under particular or various public land laws than for retention in Federal ownership for management purposes.

CLEARLIST: The approved title document with certification that conveys title to public land selected as indemnity for school lands lost by natural deficiency or prior appropriation.

COLOR-OF-TITLE: A claim based on an erroneous but good faith claim of title.

COMMUNICATION SITE: An area of public land granted to an applicant under authority contained in the Act of October 21, 1976, and the regulations, to be used for a communication structure or facility.

COMPETITIVE LEASE: An oil or gas lease or geothermal lease covering public lands within a known producing oil or gas field, which is issued to the successful bidder at public auction or through sealed bids.

CONDEMNATION: In real property law, the process by which property of a private owner is taken for pubic use, without his consent, but upon the award of payment of just compensation.

CONTEST: Proceedings against a filing, claim, or entry alleging that it does not meet the requirements of the public land laws. It may be initiated by the Government or by an adverse claimant.

CONTIGUOUS LANDS AND CONTIGUOUS LEGAL SUBDIVISIONS: Lands or legal subdivisions having a common boundary.

CONTROL DOCUMENT INDEX: A reference file consisting of microphotographic copies of legal documents mounted in aperture tabulating cards arranged by State, Meridian, Range and Township.

CONVEYANCE: In real property law, a transfer of legal title to land. An instrument, such as a deed, by which interest in real property is created or by which title to real property is transferred from grantor to grantee.

COORDINATES: A set of numbers used in specifying the location of a point.

CORNER: The point or place where two converging lines, sides or edges meet.

CORNERING: Lands having a common survey corner but not a common boundary.

CURATIVE PATENT: An amended patent to correct a previously issued, defective patent.

D

DEED: A document which transfers title to real property.

DEPENDENT RESURVEY: A retracement and re-establishment of the lines of the original survey in their true original locations according to the best available evidence of the position of the original corners.

DESERT LAND ENTRY: An entry of irrigable, arid, agricultural, public lands under the Act of March 3, 1877, which entryman must reclaim, irrigate, and cultivate.

DESIGNATION: The official identification and naming of a general area or site on public land. No lands may be designated until they are either (1) withdrawn, or (2) given special status by Act of Congress.

DISTRICT: The specific area of public lands administered by a District Manager.

DISTRICT OFFICE: A local Bureau office under the jurisdiction and direction of the State Office.

DOCUMENT: An instrument on which is recorded, by means of letters, figures, marks or symbols, information which may be relied upon as the basis, proof or support of something. A deed, agreement, title paper, letter or other written instrument used to prove a fact.

E

EASEMENT: An interest or right in land owned by another that entitles its holder to a specific limited use; such as laying a sewer, crossing over property or putting up power lines.

ELONGATED SECTION: A section which exceeds 85 chains in either length or width as originally surveyed and platted.

EMINENT DOMAIN: The right of governmental agencies to take private property for public use.

ENABLING ACT: In reference to admission of new States into the Union, it is an act passed by Congress empowering the people of a territory to frame a constitution and lay down certain requirements that must be met prerequisite to statehood.

ENTRY: An allowed applications which permits the entryman to enter upon and commence the actions required to gain title to the land.

ENTRYMAN: The individual or legal entity which made an entry.

ESTATE: The interest which anyone has in lands or in any other property."Estate" is used in conveyances in connection with the words "right," "title" and "interest."

EVIDENCE OF TITLE: A policy of title insurance; or a certificate of title issued by a title insurance company authorized by law to issue same; or an abstract of title prepared and authenticated by a licensed abstractor or abstract company or by the recorder of deeds or other proper officer of the State under his official seal.

EXCHANGE: A trading of public lands (surface and/or subsurface estates) that usually do not have high public value, for lands in other ownerships which do have value for public use, management and enjoyment. The exchange may be for the benefit of other Federal agencies as well as BLM.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 11593: The Bureau must take into account effect of our action on cultural resources. Must identify archaeological and historic sites for National Register of Historic Places; and assure that any Federally owned property during the interim is not altered, transferred or demolished.

F

FEDERAL LAND POLICY AND MANAGEMENT ACT (FLPMA): BLM's organic Act of October 21, 1976 (PL 94-579), which established public land policy and established guidelines for administration.

FEDERAL POWER PROJECT RESERVATION: A reservation of public lands for use in a project developed under the jurisdiction of the Federal Power Commission.

FIELD NOTES: The official written record of a land survey, certified by the field surveyor, and approved by the proper authority, providing courses and distances of lines surveyed and descriptions of corner monuments.

FILING: An application or other proper document which has been submitted to the proper official or office or an application pursuant to the Mineral Leasing Act.

FINAL CERTIFICATE: A document which evidences that patent should issue. It alone is sufficient to vest title in the would-be patentee.

FRACTIONAL TOWNSHIP OR SECTION: A situation called "natural deficiency" caused by surveys creating fractional measurements due to presence of a large meanderable body, impassable objects, a State or reservation or grant boundary, or similar reserves.

FREE-USE PERMIT: A permit which allows the removal of timber or other resources from the public lands free of charge.

G

GENERAL LAND OFFICE: One of the predecessors of the Bureau of Land Management. It was charged with land disposal, record keeping, and cadastral survey.

GENERAL ORDERS OF WITHDRAWALS: Executive Orders No. 6910 of November 26, 1934, and No. 6964 of February 5, 1935, which withdrew for classification all vacant public lands in the eleven Western States plus certain other public land States.

GOVERNMENT CONTEST: A proceeding initiated by the Government to determine the validity of a claim.

GRANT: A gift of public lands either in quantity or in place. Also, the document or the action which conveys land or an interest in land.

GRANTEE: One to whom a grant is made. The recipient of the right-of-way, patent, deed, or other benefit.

GRANTOR: The person who makes the grant.

GRAZING ALLOTMENT: A specific area within which grazing use is authorized. It generally encompasses public lands but may include parcels of private and state lands.

GRAZING DISTRICT: A specific area of public land administered for grazing purposes under Section 3 of the Taylor Grazing Act. Public lands outside grazing district boundaries are administered under Section 15 of the Act or other applicable authority.

GUIDE MERIDIAN: An auxiliary governing line projected north along an astronomical meridian, from points established on the base line or a standard parallel, usually at intervals of 24 miles east or west of the principal meridian, on which township, section, and quarter-section corners are established.

H

HEARING, CONTEST: Formal proceedings for the taking of evidence from the parties to the contest and their witnesses.

HISTORICAL INDEX: A chronological summary of all actions which affect, have affected, or will affect the title to, disposition of, or use status of lands within a township.

HOLDER: Any state or local governmental entity, individual, partnership, corporation, association, or other business entity receiving or using a right-of-way under Title V of FLPMA.

HOMESTEAD ENTRY: An entry initiated under any of the homestead laws, that leads to patent for entrymen who settle upon and improve agricultural lands.

I

IMPROVEMENTS: Includes any structures of a permanent nature placed upon land, which tend to increase its value.

INDEMNITY LANDS: Alternate lands granted to states under the public land laws when granted lands were unavailable.

INDEMNITY SELECTION: A selection made to compensate for lands that were lost.

INDEPENDENT RESURVEY: An establishment of new section lines for the public land which are independent and without reference to the corners of the original survey, while, at the same time, preserving the boundaries of the alienated lands.

INDEX TO MISCELLANEOUS DOCUMENTS: A chronological listing of public laws, Acts of Congress and Presidental orders. The listed documents are those that apply to lands not specifically described on which conditions may exist that would restrict the disposal or use of lands.

INDIAN ALLOTMENT: An allocation of public lands or Indian reservation land to an Indian for his individual use.

INDIAN FEE PATENT: A patent which conveys fee title to qualified Indians to lands entered under an Indian allotment.

INDIAN RESERVATION: A reservation for the use of native Indians.

INDIAN TRUST PATENT: A patent issued to an Indian to lands that cannot be alienated or sold for a period of years and where legal title remains in the United States.

INITIAL POINT: A point which is established under the rectangular system of surveys and from which is initiated the cadastral survey of the principal meridian and base line that controls the cadastral survey of the public lands within a given area.

IRREGULAR BOUNDARY: Township or section lines not originally established as straight lines or which a retracement reveals as not having been surveyed as a straight line.

IRON POST: The iron post adopted by BLM for monumenting the surveys of the public lands evolved after passage of the 1908 act which provided for the purchase of metal monuments to be used for public-land survey corners wherever practicable.

L

LAND STATUS RECORDS: Those records maintained by the Bureau of Land Management, showing ownership of the public lands and the availability of the lands for use under the public land laws. The land status records include the Master Title Plat, Supplemental Master Title Plat, Use Plat, Historical Index, Control Document Index, Index to Miscellaneous Documents, Serial Register Page, also these records may include Mineral Location and Contest Index, Tract Books, Plat Books, Patents, Deeds, Name Index Card Files, and the Working and Reference Records.

LATITUDE: 1) The distance on the earth's surface, north or south of the equator, expressed in either linear or angular measurements. 2) The north-south component of a traverse course.

LEASE: An authorization (usually long-term) to possess and use public lands for a fixed period of time.

LEASEABLE MINERALS: Oil and gas, oil and shale, coal, potash, phosphate, sodium, sulphur in Louisiana and New Mexico, silica deposits in certain parts of Nevada, and certain minerals under special acts., i.e., the Acquired Lands Act, the Geothermal Steam Act.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION/LAND DESCRIPTION: The method of locating or describing land in relation to the public land survey.

LEGAL TITLE: Title enforceable in a court of law, which is apparently complete and perfect and is generally associated with record ownership.

LIEU SELECTION OR INDEMNITY SELECTION: A selection made to compensate for lands that were lost.

LODE CLAIM: A mining claim embracing public lands which contain minerals occurring in a vein or lode.

LONGITUDE: The distance on the earth's surface, east or west of a defined meridian, usually the meridian of Greenwich (0° Longitude), expressed in angular measure, such as 90° West Longitude.

LOT: A subdivision of an irregular portion of a section which cannot be described by aliquot parts.

M

MASTER TITLE PLAT: A composite of the survey plats of a township on which is shown the ownership and land status.

MATERIAL SITE: The public lands from which sand and gravel may be taken (with the proper permit and authorization) for construction or maintenance of state or federal-aid highways. administered by the Forest Service, United States Department of Agriculture.

MEANDER OR MEANDER LINES: The traverse of the margin of a permanent natural body of water executed for the purpose of determining the quantity of land remaining after the segregation of the water area.

MERIDIAN: 1) A north-south line from which longitudes (or departures) and azimuths are reckoned; or a plane, normal to the geoid or spheroid, defining such a line. 2) A flag or sight near a survey camp used to test solar transits for adjustment.

METES AND BOUNDS: A method of describing a parcel of land by citing the owners of abutting lands and describing the length of each course of a boundary as "along" some apparent line, such as, "along a stream" or "along the road." In modern usage, a metes and bounds description includes the bearings and distances of each course.

MILITARY RESERVATION: A withdrawal for the use of the Department of Defense for military purposes.

MILLSITE ENTRY: A cash entry of non-mineral public lands which are to be used as a mill site for the reduction of ore or in the development of a lode claim.

MINERAL APPLICATION: An application to purchase public lands which are held as a mining claim or which are desired as a mill site.

MINERAL CLASSIFICATION: The classification of lands as being valuable for a specific mineral or minerals, also the public lands so classified.

MINERAL IN CHARACTER: Lands where the mineral is ordinarily in sufficient quantity to add to their richness and to justify expenditures for its extraction.

MINERAL LANDS: Public lands which have been designated as containing valuable minerals; or are known to contain valuable minerals.

MINERAL LEASE: A lease which authorized the development and production of leaseable minerals from public lands.

MINERAL LEASING ACT: Act of February 25, 1920, authorized leasing of public lands for extraction of oil and gas, coal, phosphate, sodium and other minerals.

M

MASTER TITLE PLAT: A composite of the survey plats of a township on which is shown the ownership and land status.

MATERIAL SITE: The public lands from which sand and gravel may be taken (with the proper permit and authorization) for construction or maintenance of State or federal aid highways administered by the Forest Service, United States Department of Agriculture.

MEANDER OF A WATER BODY: The traverse of the margin of a permanent natural body of water executed for the purpose of determining the quantity of land remaining after the segregation of the water area.

MERIDIAN: 1) A north-south line from which longitudes (or departures) and azimuths are reckoned; or a plane, normal to the geoid or spheroid, defining such a line. 2) A flag on/right near a survey [illegible] to and solar marks for adjustment.

METES AND BOUNDS: A method of describing a parcel of land by citing the courses of adjoining lands and describing the length of each course of a boundary as "along" some apparent line, such as "along a stream" or "along the road." In modern usage, a metes and bounds description includes the bearings and distances of each course.

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MINERAL LANDS: Public lands which have been designated as containing valuable minerals, or are known to contain valuable minerals.

MINERAL LEASE: A lease which authorized the development and production of leasable minerals from public lands.

MINERAL LEASING ACT: Act of February 25, 1920, authorized leasing of public lands for extraction of oil and gas, coal, phosphate, sodium and other minerals.

MINERAL LOCATION AND CONTEST INDEX: A component of the land status records. It is a listing by township and range of mineral location notices filed under special mining claim recording laws, abandonments and relinquishments of mining claims secured by the Government, and of actions initiated to determine the validity of mineral, agricultural and other claims on national resource lands.

MINERAL MONUMENT: A monument which is established in connection with a mineral survey.

MINERAL PERMIT: A permit which authorizes prospecting for certain leasable minerals on public lands.

MINERAL RESERVATION: A clause in the conveyance document which reserves minerals on public lands.

MINERAL RIGHTS: The rights of one who owns the mineral estate (subsurface).

MINERAL SEGREGATION SURVEY: The measurements and corner restorations needed to define the boundaries between a mineral claim and other public lands for administrative purposes. Even though it also defines the boundaries of the mineral claim, in whole or in part, that is merely incidental and does not confer any rights to the mineral claimant.

MINERAL SURVEY: A survey of a mining claim. Performed either by cadastral survey or by an approved surveyor.

MINERAL WITHDRAWAL FOR CLASSIFICATION: A withdrawal of public lands which are potentially valuable for leasable minerals. This precludes the disposal of the lands except with a mineral reservation, or unless the lands are found to be not valuable for minerals.

MINING CLAIM: A possessory interest in land obtained by physically locating certain lands on the ground under the authority of the 1872 Mining Law on which a discovery of valuable locatable minerals has been made. A mining claim can be located on any vacant unappropriated public lands.

MINOR SUBDIVISIONS: A quarter-quarter section subdivided into quarter-quarter-quarter sections (1/64 or 10 acre units), or aliquot parts as small as 1/256 (2.5 acres).

MONUMENT: A physical structure, such as an iron post, marked stone, or tree in place, which marks the location of a corner point established by a Cadastral Survey. Objects, to be ranked as monuments, should have certain physical properties such as visibility, durability and stability, and they must define location without resorting to measurements. “Monument” and “corner” are not synonymous, although the two terms are often used largely in the same sense.

N

NATIONAL FOREST: A reservation of a forest or watershed which is administered by the Forest Service, United States Department of Agriculture.

NATIONAL FOREST HOMESTEAD ENTRY: A homestead entry initiated under the Act of June 11, 1906, which provided for homesteading within national forests of public lands classified as more valuable for agriculture than for forestry.

NATIONAL MEMORIAL: A reservation embracing memorials of national interest which is administered by the National Park Service.

NATIONAL MONUMENT: A reservation of lands embracing values of historic and/or scientific interest which is administered by the National Park Service.

NATIONAL PARK: A reservation embracing recreational areas which is administered by the National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior.

NATURAL AREA: An area set aside in an undisturbed state to preserve natural and environmental values.

NAVIGABLE WATERS: Waters which afford a channel for useful commerce or travel. The beds of navigable bodies of water are not public domain and are not subject to survey and disposal by the United States. Under the laws of the United States the navigable waters have always been and shall forever remain common highways. This includes all tidewater streams and other important permanent bodies of water whose natural and normal condition at the date of admission of a state into the Union was such as to classify the same as navigable water.

O

O & C LANDS: Public lands in western Oregon which were granted to the Oregon Central railroad companies (later the Oregon and California Railroad Co.) to aid in the construction of railroads, but which were later forfeited and returned to the Federal Government by Congressional revestment of title.

OCCUPANCY: Actual possession and use of land in something more than a slight or sporadic manner.

OFFERED LANDS: The lands owned by the proponent and being offered in exchange.

OFFICIAL CADASTRAL SURVEY: The public lands are deemed to be surveyed when the survey has been accepted and the plat thereof has been filed in the appropriate land office by direction of the Bureau of Land Management. No subdivisions of the public lands may be conveyed or in any way disposed of until so identified.

OPENING ORDER: The order which opens the lands to the operation or partial operation of the public land laws. May be a part of the revocation order. It need not be a separate documents.

ORDINANCE OF MAY 20, 1785: The first land ordinance, it was entitled "An ordinance for ascertaining the mode of disposing of lands in the western territory."

P

PATENT: As it relates to public land laws, a patent is the instrument (or deed) by which the Government conveys title to the public lands.

PATENT RESERVATION: A clause in a patent or instrument of conveyance by which the grantor creates and reserves to himself, some right or interest in the estate granted, which had no previous existence, but is called into being by the patent. The reservation is always in favor of and for the benefit of the grantor, thus a right-of-way grant which exists at the time of the patent is issued can never amount to a reservation unless the right-of-way is for the benefit of the United States. Otherwise, a valid existing right-of-way should be protected by issuing the patent, "subject to" the right-of-way.

PERMIT: A short-term (generally under 3 years), revocable authorization to use public lands for specific purposes.

PLAT: As used technically by the BLM, the drawing which represents the particular area included in a survey, such as a township, private land claim or mineral claim, and the lines surveyed, established, retraced or resurveyed, showing the direction and length of each such line; the relation to the adjoining official surveys; the boundaries, descriptions, and area of each parcel of land subdivided; and, as nearly as may be practicable, a representation of the relief and improvements within the limits of the survey.

POWERSITE CLASSIFICATION: A classification which in reality is a segregation against the operation of the land laws made by the Federal Power Commission for lands having potential for or needed for power projects and associated transmission lines. Lands classified to benefit transmission lines are open to the operation of the public land laws subject to the use for transmission lines.

POWERSITE RESERVE: A reservation of public lands which have potential value for water power development.

PRIVATE EXCHANGE: An exchange between the Federal Government and any landowner other than a State.

PRIVATE LAND CLAIM: A claim based on the assertion that the claimant (or his predecessors in interest) derived his right while the land was under the dominion of a foreign government.

PROTEST: A statement of objection to a proposed classification, application, claim, etc.

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PERMIT: A short-term (generally under 5 years), revocable authorization to use public lands for specific purposes.

PLAT: As used technically by the BLM, the drawing which represents the particular area included in a survey, such as a township, private land claim or mineral claim, and the lines surveyed, established, retraced or resurveyed, showing the direction and length of each such line; the relation to the adjoining official surveys; the boundaries, descriptions, and area of each parcel of land subdivided; and, as nearly as may be practicable, a representation of the relief and improvements within the limits of the survey.

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PROTEST: A statement of objection to a proposed classification, application, claim, etc.

PROTRACTION DIAGRAM: It is prepared for the purpose of describing unsurveyed land areas.

PUBLIC DOMAIN: Vacant, unappropriated, and unreserved public lands, or public lands withdrawn by E.O. 6910 of November 26, 1934, or E.O. 6964 of February 5, 1935, and not otherwise reserved, or public lands within grazing districts established under the Act of June 28, 1934, and not otherwise withdrawn or reserved.

PUBLIC LANDS: Any land and interest in land owned by the United States within the several States and administered by the Secretary of the Interior through the Bureau of Land Management, without regard to how the United States acquired ownership, except- 1. lands located on the outer Continental Shelf and 2. lands held for the benefit of Indians, Aleuts, and Eskimos.

PUBLIC LAND LAWS: The body of laws which regulates the administration of the public lands and the resources thereon.

PUBLIC LAND ORDER (PLO): An order effecting, modifying, or revoking a withdrawal or reservation which has been issued by the Secretary pursuant to his delegations of authority.

PUBLIC LAND STATES: The States which were created out of the original public domain: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

PUBLIC PURPOSE: A use in which the public has an interest, affecting the safety, health, morale, and welfare of the general public, but does not include use for habitation, cultivation, trade or manufacturing.

PUBLIC WATER RESERVES: Pursuant to and under the authority of Sec. 10 of the Act of December 29, 1916, and in aid of pending legislation, the President issued the Executive Order of April 17, 1926. This reserved for public use every vacant, unappropriated, and unreserved smallest legal subdivision which contains a spring or waterhole. If the lands are unsurveyed, the reservation covers all lands within 1/4 mile of the spring or waterhole.

Q

QUARTER SECTION: One-fourth of a section: 160 acres.

QUIT-CLAIM DEED (Bureau of Land Management): The type of deed used to relinquish all claims of the United States in lands which were conveyed to the United States in connection with some transaction. A deed which does not allege ownership.

R

RAILROAD GRANT: Usually, title to railroad grant lands passed under patent conveyances. These grants were made to railroads to aid in their construction, and covered designated sections within specified grant limits.

RAILROAD LIEU SELECTION: A lieu selection made by an applicant other than a railroad for lands to replace those lost or relinquished within a railroad grant.

RANGE: A north-south tier of townships or sections. A range of townships is described by its relationship to the principal meridian.

RECLAMATION HOMESTEAD ENTRY: A homestead entry (not exceeding 160 acres) under the Act of June 17, 1902, which provides for entry within reclamation projects.

RECLAMATION PROJECT: A water development and irrigation project of the Bureau of Reclamation.

RECLAMATION WITHDRAWALS:

first form: A reclamation withdrawal of public lands that are or may be needed in connection with the construction work and maintenance of a reclamation project.

second form: A reclamation withdrawal of public lands that are susceptible of irrigation from a reclamation project.

The distinction of first and second form withdrawals have been eliminated and now all such withdrawals are merely "reclamation withdrawals."

RECONVEYED LANDS: Lands once patented or granted but later returned to Federal ownership.

RECORD: 1) The approved field notes and plat of a survey. 2) A value of area, bearing or distance from the approved field notes. 3) The act of recording a document as in a county. 4) All of the documents pertaining to title and boundaries including status, group files, county surveyor information as well as field notes and plats, when used as "to search the record."

RECREATION AND PUBLIC PURPOSES ACT (R&PP): The Act of June 14, 1926, as amended, allows the disposal of public lands to any State, local, Federal, or political instrumentality or nonprofit organization for any recreational or public purpose, at the discretion of the authorized officer.

RECREATION SITES: Relatively small tracts of land which have value for concentrated and intensive recreation use that usually requires construction and maintenance of public facilities.

RECTANGULAR SYSTEM OF SURVEYS: The cadastral system of survey, used to subdivide the public lands into townships, sections, and sectional subdivisions.

REJECTION: The denial of an application because it is improperly filed, conflicts with the public land laws or conflicts with public policy.

RELICTION: Land that is uncovered by the gradual subsidene of water.

RESERVATION: A withdrawal of a permanent nature, dedicated to a specific public purpose.

RESERVATION LANDS: Includes national parks and monuments, or any other reservations of the United States for the use of or administration by the National Park Service, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Reclamation, or any agency outside the Department of the Interior.

RESURVEY: A term applied to the reestablishment or restoration of land boundaries and subdivisions by the rerunning and remarking of the lines that were represented in the field note record and on the plat of the previous official survey.

RESTORATION: Normally associated with and contemporaneous with the revocation of withdrawals. This is the restoring of the lands to the status of unreserved public lands and it opens them to the operation of the public land laws and mining and mineral leasing laws as appropriate.

REVERSIONARY CLAUSE OR REVERTER: A provision in a patent for the lands to return to United States ownership for failure of development or upon the happening of a prescribed event.

REVOCATION: The action which cancels a withdrawal. It need not necessarily "open" the lands to application or entry.

RIGHT-OF-WAY: An easement, license, or permit; does not grant an estate of any kind, only the right of use. May also include a site.

RIPARIAN RIGHTS: The rights of the owners of lands on the banks of watercourses or small lakes relating to the ownership of soil under the water and to accretions and relictions.

S

SCHOOL LAND DEFICIENCY: The amount of land lost by the State for which it is entitled to school land indemnity selections.

SCHOOL LAND INDEMNITY SELECTION: The selection made by a State to take the place of school lands the State could not receive.

SCHOOL LAND PATENT: A patent to give evidence of title to lands to the State. Title can automatically pass without issuance of a patent.

SCHOOL SECTION: A section granted to the State for the support of the common schools.

SCRIP: A certificate which allowed the owner to acquire a certain number of acres from vacant, unappropriated public lands.

SECTION: 640 acres, one mile square.

SEGREGATION: Any action such as a withdrawal or allowed application (exchange) which suspends the operation of the general public land laws. To separate or set apart; to remove lands from the operation of part or all the public land mineral laws.

SELECTED LANDS: The public domain lands sought by the proponent in an exchange.

SERIAL REGISTERS: Serial registers were instituted in 1908 as a digest of land case records. BLM maintains these individual chronological records of each public land transaction. Each transaction (case) appears as a page or pages in a serial register. Each one is identified by the serial number assigned to it. A running record of each case, its inception and any actions on it, is kept in book form in the land office of each public domain land state. Serial register pages are now microfilmed for ease in retrieval of information as well as to conserve space.

SMALLEST LEGAL SUBDIVISION: A quarter-quarter section; 40 acres.

SMALL TRACT: Public lands (5 acres or less) which have been found to be chiefly valuable for sale as a home, cabin, camp or business site under the Act of June 1, 1938.

STANDARD PARALLEL: Also called "correction line." A line extended east or west from the principal meridian, usually at intervals of 24 miles north and south of the base line, along a parallel of latitude. Standard parallels are established to correct for the convergence of range lines and to maintain a workable adherence to the requirement that each township be 6 miles square. They are surveyed in the manner prescribed for the survey of the base line.

STATE EXCHANGE: An exchange of lands between the Federal Government and a State.

STATEHOOD: The Thirteen Original States organized the Federal Union under the name of "The United States of America" by ratifying the Articles of Confederation, and later, the Constitution. They are: New Hampshire, New York, Maryland, Georgia, Delaware, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Jersey, North Carolina and South Carolina.

STATUS (Land): The land title or use information concerning a specific piece of land. The information would include such things as: ownership; claims or applications outstanding; known minerals (if any); withdrawals; or in general, any information that might affect how the land laws would operate with respect to the land.

STOCKRAISING HOMESTEAD ACT: Western lands that were not suitable for cultivation but were suitable for stock grazing could be patented under the Act of December 29, 1916.

STOCKRAISING HOMESTEAD ENTRY: A homestead not exceeding 640 acres which unlike the general homestead laws provide for the homesteading of lands which were chiefly valuable for grazing and forage crops and not for agriculture.

SUBDIVISION: (verb) 1) Subdivision of a township into sections, 2) Subdivision of a section into half-sections, quarter-sections, sixteenth-sections or sixty-fourth-sections, or into lots, according to the Manual of Surveying Instructions. 3) The process of surveying such subdivisions. 4) In the private practice of land survey, subdivision is the division of an area into lots, streets, rights-of-way, easements and accessories, usually according to State law and local regulations.-(noun) A particular aliquot part, lot, or parcel of land described according to the official plat of its cadastral survey.

SUPPLEMENTAL PLAT: A plat which shows a revised subdivision of one or more sections without a change in the section boundaries or to the survey record.

SURFACE RIGHTS: All rights in the surface of the land except the oil, gas and other mineral or subsurface rights.

SURVEY MONUMENT: A physical object (iron post, stone, tree, etc.) which marks the location of a point which is established by cadastral survey.

SURVEY PLAT: A plat representing the lines surveyed, established, retraced or resurveyed, showing the direction and length of each line; the relation to adjoining official surveys; the boundaries, descriptions, and area of each parcel of land; and the topography, culture, and improvements within the limits of the survey.

T

TAYLOR GRAZING ACT: The Act of June 28, 1934 , as amended. Primary purpose of this Act was to stop continuing injury to the public rangelands through over grazing and other misuse.

TIMBER AND STONE ENTRY: A cash entry for lands which were valuable for timber or stone and which were unfit for cultivation.

TOWNSHIP: The unit of survey of the public lands; normally a quadrangle approximately 6 miles on a side with boundaries conforming to meridians and parallels within established limits, containing thirty-six sections, some of which are designed to correct for the convergence of meridians or range lines.

TOWNSITE: An area of public land which is identified for disposal as an urban development.

TRACT BOOKS: The central land status records which originally depicted the status of the public domain. For the most part, replaced by the Master Title Plat.

U

UNAUTHORIZED USE (TRESPASS): Any occupancy or use of the public lands or resources of the United States without authority.

UNRESERVED PUBLIC LANDS: Those public lands not covered by a reservation or a withdrawal, except by the general orders of withdrawal.

UNSURVEYED LANDS: Lands not yet surveyed.

USE AUTHORIZATION: Approval of a proposed use for land or resources on the prescribed form or document designated for such use; a document showing permission to use land or the resources thereon; a formalized grant pursuant to a request to use land or resources.

USE PLAT: A copy of the master title plat and any supplemental master title plats of a township. Use plats show, in addition to the status shown on the master title plat, information concerning use of the lands, such as applications, leases and permits.

V

VACANT PUBLIC LANDS: Public lands which are unappropriated and unreserved and not within a withdrawal. Lands that are not reserved except by the general orders of withdrawal.

VALID CLAIM: A mineral or ore body of sufficient size and quantity to justify an ordinarily prudent man in the expenditure of his labor and means in an effort to develop a paying mine.

W

WATER RIGHT: The authority, whether by prior ownership, contract, purchase, or appropriation in accordance with State law, to use water for any beneficial use.

WILDERNESS: Areas in a native condition or reverted to a native condition, substantially free of man-made structures and human habitation.

WILDLIFE REFUGE: A reservation for the protection of wildlife.

WITHDRAWALS: Removal or withholding of public lands by statute or secretarial order, from operation of some or all of the public land laws (surface, mining and/or mineral leasing).

For additional assistance with definitions of public land terms, refer to

Glossary of BLM Surveying and Mapping Terms, prepared by the Cadastral Survey Training Staff, Denver Service Center, 1978.

Glossary of Public Land Terms, Phoenix Training Center, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Department of the Interior, January, 1983.

METES AND BOUNDS

What Are Metes and Bounds?

Metes and bounds is another way of saying distances (metes) and direction (bounds). The metes and bounds system of survey relies on the use of convenient natural or man-made objects as monuments (or markers) from which distances and direction are measured. The metes and bounds system served as the principal method of survey during America's early days.

In a metes and bounds survey description a stream might serve as one side of a parcel, an old oak tree as a corner, a road as another side of the parcel, a pile of rocks as a corner, a fence as another side and so on until all boundaries of the parcel are defined.

The method was handy, but it had two major drawbacks: (1) there might not be a convenient corner or boundary marker where one was needed and (2) over a period of time oak trees died, piles of rocks were moved, and roads became overgrown with vegetation from lack of use.

The following description in the Hartford Connecticut probate court records for 1812 provides a colorful illustration of this early method:

Commencing at a heap of stone about a stone's throw from a certain small clump of alders, near a brook running down off from a rather high part of said ridge; thence, by a straight line to a certain marked white birch tree, about two or three times as far from a jog in a fence going around a ledge nearby; thence by another straight line in a different direction, around said ledge and the Great Swamp, so called; thence, in line of said lot in part an in part by another piece of fence which joins on to said line, and by extension of the general run of said fence to a heap of stone near a surface rock; thence, as aforesaid, to the "Horn." So called, and passing around the same as aforesaid, as far as the "Great Bend," so called, and from thence to a squarish sort of a jog in another fence, and so on to a marked black oak tree with stones piles around it; thence, by another straight line in about a contrary direction and somewhere about parallel with the line around by the ledge and the Great Swamp, to a stake and stone bounds not far off from the old Indian trail; thence, by another straight line on a course diagonally parallel, or nearly so, with "Fox Hollow Run,". So called, to a certain marked red cedar tree out on a sandy sort of plain; thence, by another straight line, in a different direction, to a certain marked yellow oak tree on the off side of a knoll with a flat stone laid against it; thence, after turning around in another direction, and by a sloping straight line to a certain heap of stone which is, by pacing, just 18 rods and about one half a rod more from the stump of the big hemlock tree where Phil Blake killed the bear; thence, to the corner begun at by two straight lines of about equal length, which are to be run by some skilled and competent surveyor, so as to include the area and acreage as herein before set forth.

From the description, drawbacks to the metes and bounds method are obvious. They can be resolved, however, by setting a permanent man-made monument at one corner of the parcel and then describing the parcel in distance (metes) and direction (bounds) from that point.

Metes or distances, are usually measured in feet, usually to the nearest tenth or one-hundredth of a foot. Metes may also be stated in chains or rods.

Bounds, or directions are shown in degrees, minutes and seconds. In legal land descriptions we deal in 90 degree segments. There are 60 minutes in each degree and 60 seconds in each minute. The symbols for degrees, minutes and seconds are as follows:

degree - °
minute - '
second - "

Special Surveys and the Use of Metes and Bounds

The metes and bounds method is used today when defining boundaries for irregularly shaped parcels of land that cannot be described, or would be impractical to describe, in any other way.

In order to describe a parcel of land using the metes and bounds method, a point of beginning is established. The location of a parcel of land may be defined by stating its position in relation to established monuments of known position or by stating its geographic position (latitude and longitude). In metes and bounds descriptions this is generally accomplished by a complete description of the point of beginning. The information furnished should be sufficient to enable a competent surveyor to locate and identify the initial point. Frequently a statement regarding nearby topographic or cultural features or objects is of great value.

If the point of beginning is an established corner of an official survey or is connected by survey to such a corner, the latter should be described by corner and survey number or other appropriate designation without detailed description of the monument itself. The latitude and longitude should be given unless the beginning point is a corner of the public-land rectangular surveys or connected by survey to such a corner.

After a point of beginning has been established, the description of the survey is written with the use of natural and artificial boundaries. Occasionally the boundaries of a parcel are defined entirely or in part by natural monuments, such as streams, lakes, divides, or straight lines connecting prominent features of topography. In such cases it is essential that each boundary be described so definitely and specifically that there is no uncertainty as to its identification.

In the case of a stream or river, the middle of the channel or one bank is usually specified. Facing downstream, the bank on the left hand is termed the left bank and that on the right hand the right bank. Where lakes, large rivers, or tidal waters are involved, the intended elevation or stage of water should be specified, such as low-water mark, mean high-water mark, or mean high tide.

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If the point of beginning is an established corner of an official survey, or is connected by survey to such a corner, the latter should be identified by its official survey designation or other appropriate designation without detailed description of the monument itself. The latitude and longitude should be given unless the beginning point is a corner of the public land surveys or connected by survey to such a corner.

After a point of beginning has been established, the description of the parcel is written with the use of natural and artificial boundaries. Occasionally the boundaries of a parcel are defined entirely or in part by natural monuments, such as streams, lakes, rivers, or straight lines connecting prominent features of topography. In such cases it is essential that such boundary be described so definitely and specifically that there is no uncertainty as to its identification.

In the case of a stream or river, the middle and thread/centerline or one bank is usually specified. Facing downstream, the bank on the left hand is termed the left bank and that on the right hand the right bank. Where lakes, large rivers, or tidal waters are involved, the elevation or stage of water should be specified, such as low-water mark, mean high-water mark, or mean high tide

Similarly, in referring to a natural monument such as a divide or peak, or to such permanent artificial monuments as highways, railroads, ditches, the specific line or point intended to be used should be described with sufficient particularity as to be capable of definite identification on the ground.

A statement of the area of the parcel usually follows the description and in most cases is expressed in acres. Approximate areas should be indicated as such and given in even acres.

Examples of Metes-and-Bounds Descriptions

Example No. 1

Beginning at corner No. 1, a hemlock post, 4 in. square, 24 in. above ground, located on the Takotna Highway about 1/4 mile southeasterly from its intersection with the left bank of Kuskokwim River and in approximate latitude 62° 52' N., longitude 155° 40' W. Corner No. 2 of U. S. Survey 999 bears N. 26° 59' W., 327.6 ft.

From corner No. 1, by metes and bounds,

S. 25° 43' W., 1900 ft., to corner No. 2;
S. 57° 30' W., 3000 ft., to corner No. 3;
S. 32° 30' E., 830 ft., to corner No. 4;
N. 57° 30' E., 4000 ft., to corner No. 5;
N. 25° 43' E., 1650 ft., to corner No. 6;
N. 34° 17' W., 550 ft., to corner No. 7;
S. 85° 38' W., 871.6 ft., to corner No. 1,the place of beginning.

The parcel as described contains 121.66 acres

Example No. 2

Beginning at the confluence of the Chvilnuk and Yukon Rivers in approximate latitude 61° 58'15" N., longitude 162° 48' 20" W.,

Thence northeasterly upstream along the center of Chvilnuk River to its source in the Tundadula Mountains;

Easterly along the summit of the Tundadula Mountains to the source of the Bonasila River;

Southeasterly downstream along the middle of the main channel of the Bonasila River to its junction with the Stuyahok River;

Southerly upstream along the middle of the main channel of the Stuyahok River to a point due west of the source of Mountain Creek;

East to the source of Mountain Creek;

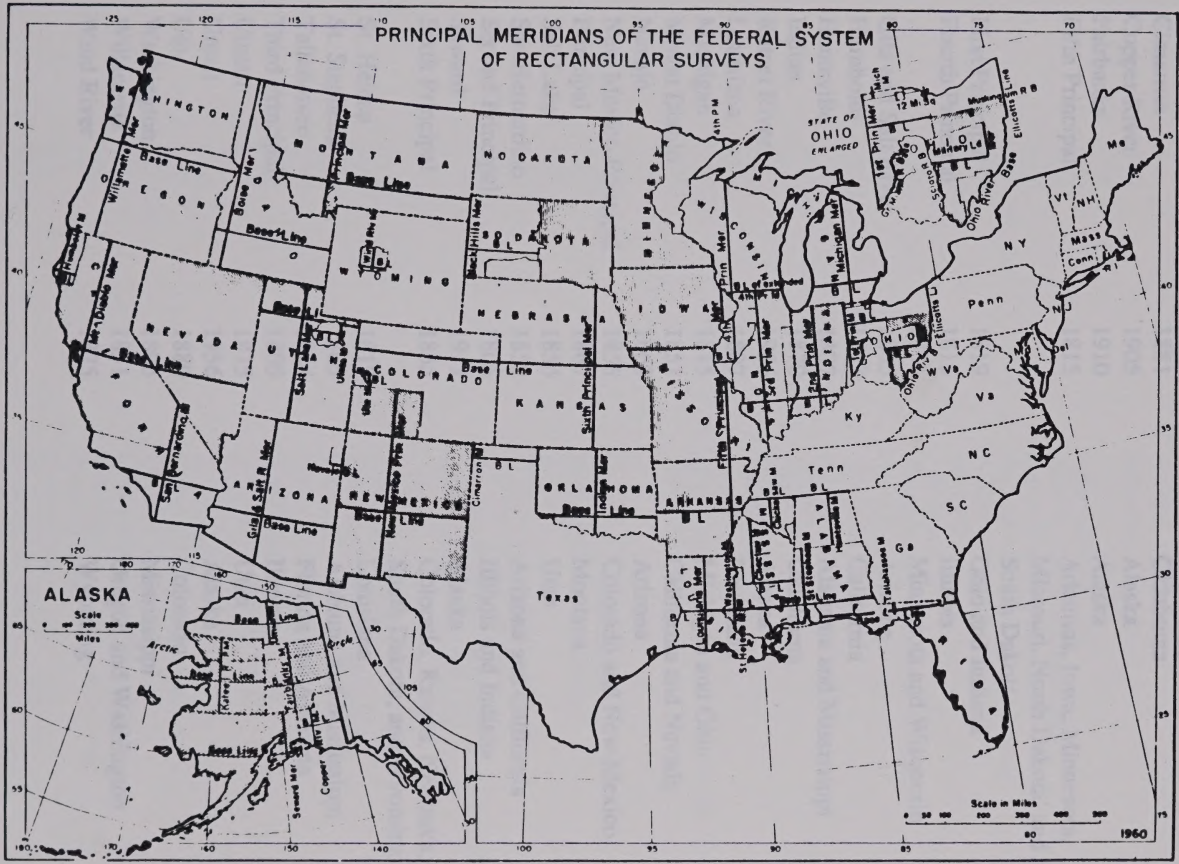
Southerly downstream along the center of Mountain Creek to its junction with Tucker's Slough;

Southerly along the center of Tucker's Slough to its junction with the Yukon River;

Southerly and westerly downstream along the right bank of the main channel of the Yukon River at mean high-water mark to the mouth of the Chvilnuk River and the place of beginning.

The parcel as described contains approximately 1,900,000 acres.

MAP OF PRINCIPAL MERIDIANS AND BASE LINES


PRINCIPAL MERIDIANS OF THE FEDERAL SYSTEM OF RECTANGULAR SURVEYS
WASHINGTON
OREGON
Willamette Mer
Base Line
MONTANA
Principal Mer
Base Line
Boise Mer
IDAHO
NO DAKOTA
SO DAKOTA
Black Hills Mer
WYOMING
Wind Riv Mer
Humboldt M
Mt Diablo Mer
Base Line
NEVADA
UTAH
Salt Lake Mer
Uinta Mer
COLORADO
Ute Mer
NEBRASKA
Base Line
Sixth Principal Mer
KANSAS
San Bernardino M
ARIZONA
Gila & Salt R Mer
Base Line
Navajo
NEW MEXICO
New Mexico Prin Mer
Base Line
Cimarron M
BL
OKLAHOMA
Indian Mer
Base Line
Texas
MINNESOTA
4th P M
IOWA
MISSOURI
Fifth Principal Mer
ARKANSAS
BL
WISCONSIN
4th P M
BL Extended
ILLINOIS
3rd Prin Mer
2nd Prin Mer
INDIANA
1st Prin Mer
OHIO
MICHIGAN
Michigan Mer
Ky
Tenn
BL
Chickasaw M
Choctaw M
Washington M
Huntsville Mer
ALABAMA
St Stephens M
Base Line
MISSISSIPPI
Louisiana Mer
St Helena M
Tallahassee M
Ga
FLORIDA
SC
NC
Va
W Va
Penn
NY
NJ
Del
Md
Vt
NH
Me
Mass
Conn
RI
Ellicotts Line
STATE OF OHIO ENLARGED
Mich
1st Prin Mer
12 Mi Sq
Muskingum R B
Ellicotts Line
Ohio River Base
Scioto R B
G M
ALASKA
Scale
Miles
Arctic Circle
Base Line
Kateel R M
Fairbanks M
Base Line
Seward Mer
Copper River M
Scale in Miles
0 50 100 200 300 400 500
1960
125
120
115
110
105
100
95
90
85
80
75
70
45
40
35
30
25
180
170
160
150
140
65
60
55
30

	MERIDIAN NAME	ADOPTED	IN STATE(S) OF
1.	Black Hills	1878	South Dakota
2.	Boise	1867	Idaho
3.	Chickasaw	1833	Mississippi
4.	Choctaw	1821	Mississippi
5.	Cimarron	1881	Oklahoma
6.	Copper River	1905	Alaska
7.	Fairbanks	1910	Alaska
8.	Fifth Principal	1815	Arkansas, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota, and South Dakota
9.	First Principal	1819	Ohio and Indiana
10.	Fourth Principal	1815	Illinois
		1831	Minnesota and Wisconsin
11.	Gila and Salt River	1865	Arizona
12.	Humboldt	1853	California
13.	Huntsville	1807	Alabama and Mississippi
14.	Indian	1870	Oklahoma
15.	Kateel River	1956	Alaska
16.	Louisiana	1807	Louisiana
17.	Michigan	1815	Michigan and Ohio
18.	Mount Diablo	1851	California and Nevada
19.	Navajo	1869	Arizona
20.	New Mexico Principal	1855	Colorado and New Mexico
21.	Principal	1867	Montana
22.	Salt Lake	1855	Utah
23.	San Bernardino	1852	Arizona and California
24.	Second Principal	1805	Illinois and Indiana
25.	Seward	1911	Alaska
26.	Sixth Principal	1855	Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, and Wyoming
27.	St. Helena	1819	Louisiana
28.	St. Stephens	1805	Alabama and Mississippi
29.	Tallahassee	1824	Florida and Alabama
30.	Third Principal	1805	Illinois
31.	Uintah	1875	Utah
32.	Umait	1956	Alaska
33.	Ute	1880	Colorado
34.	Washington	1803	Mississippi
35.	Willamette	1851	Oregon and Washington
36.	Wind River	1875	Wyoming

COMMON ABBREVIATIONS

A	Acre(s)
Acq	Acquired
Act of Cong	Act of Congress
Adm S	Administrative Site
AEC	Atomic Energy Commission
Agri	Agriculture, Agricultural
Agri Exp Sta	Agricultural Experiment Station
AHE	Additional homestead entry
All Min	All Minerals
Allot	Allotment
Admt	Amendment, Amended, Amends
ANS	Air Navigaiton Site
Apln	Application
Apln Ext	Application for extension
Appvd	Approved
Aprt	Airport
Asgn	Assignment
Asph	Asphalt
ASRHE	Additional Stockraising Homestead Entry
Auth	Authorization
Bdy, Bdrs	Boundary, Boundaries
BIA	Bureau of Indian Affairs
Blk	Block
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
BR	Bureau of Reclamation
BSFW	Bureau of Sports, Fisheries and Wildlife (now Fish and Wildlife Service)
COE	Corps of Engineers
CA	Communitization Agreement
Cad	Cadastral
Canc	Cancellation, Cancelled
Cpg	Campground
CDI	Control Document Index
CE	Cash entry
Cert	Certificate
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
Ch, Chs	Chain, Chains
CHE	Commuted Homestead Entry
Circ	Circular
Cl	Classification
C/L	Center Line
Comm P	Community Pit

Comm S	Communication Site
Condemn	Condemnation
Corp	Corporation
C/T	Color of Title
Cur Pat	Curative patent
D/C	Ditches and/or Canal
Ded	Dedication
Def	Deficiency
Dept of Agri	Department of Agriculture
Dept of Int (DOI)	Department of Interior
Des	Designation or Designated
Det	Determination
Dist	District
Div	Division
DLE	Desert Land Entry
DM	District Manager
Doc	Document
E	East
Eff	Effective
EHE	Enlarged Homestead Entry
Elim	Elimination
Enlgmt	Enlargement
EO	Executive Order
ES	Exchange Survey
Esmt	Easement
Excl	Excluding, excluded
Exp	Expire (d)
Ext	Extended, extension, extend
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
F&WS	Fish and Wildlife Service
FC	Final Certificate
Fed	Federal
FHA	Famers Home Administration
Fis	Fissionable materials
FLS	Forest Lieu selection
Fm U	Farm unit
FPA	Federal Power Act
FPC	Federal Power Commission
FR	Federal Register
Frac	Fractional
FS	Forest Service
FUP	Free Use Permit
FX	Forest Exchange

Gd	Gold
Geo	Geothermal
GLO	General Land Office
Geo Plat	Geothermal Resource Plat
Hdq S	Headquarters Site
HDS	Homestead declaratory statement
HE	Homestead Entry
HES	Homestead Entry Survey
HI	Historical Index
Hwy	Highway
IA	Indian Allotment
Iden	Identify, Identification
IL	Indemnity list State
Illus	Illustration
Incl	Including, Inclusive
Ind Fee	Indian Fee
Ind Res	Indian Reservation
Ind Tr	Indian Trust
Ind Tr Pat	Indian Trust Patent
Intpr	Interpretation
IS	Indemnity Selection
IT	Isolated Tract
Juris	Jurisdiction
KCLA	Known Coal Leasing Area
KGRA	Known Geothermal Resource Area
KGS	Known Geological Structure
KLA	Known Leasing Area
Lat	Latitude
LD	Interior Land Decision
Lic	License
LO	Land Office
Loc	Location
Long	Longitude
LS	Lieu Selection
Lsbl	Leasable
Lse	Lease
Ltr	Letter
LU	Land Utilization

Mat S	Material Site
M&B	Metes and Bounds
MCOA or MOA	Mining Claim Occupancy Act
ME	Mineral Entry
Mer, M	Meridian
Mgmt	Management
Mil Pur	Military Purpose
Mil Res	Military Reservation
Mill S	Millsite
Min	Mineral
Min Cert or MC	Mineral Certificate
Misc	Miscellaneous
MLCI	Mineral Location & Contest Index
Mod	Modification
Mon	Monument
MS	Mineral Survey
MTP	Master Title Plat
Mult Use (MU)	Multiple Use

N	North
NA	Native Allotment
NE	Northeast
nc	Noncompetitive
NF	National Forest
N Mon	National Monument
NOE	Not Open to Entry (Surface, Mining and Mineral Leasing)
NOL	Not Open to Lease
NOM	Not Open to Mining
NP	National Park
NPS	National Park Service
NRL	National Resource Lands
NW	Northwest
NWR	National Wildlife Refuge

O	Order
OE	Open to Entry
OG	Oil and Gas
Oper	Operator

Par	Parcel
Part	Partially
Pat	Patent
PD	Public Domain
Per	Permit
Pet Res	Petroleum Reserve
Pho	Phosphate

PL	Public Law
PLC	Public Land Claim
PLO	Public Land Order
Pot	Potassium
Pr Per	Prospecting permit
Pre	Pre-emption
Proc	Proclamation
Proj	Project
Prop	Propose, Proposed
Prot Wdl	Protective Withdrawal
PS	Public Sale
PU	Public Use
Pur	Purchase
PW Res	Public Water Reserve
Pwr Proj	Power Project
Pwr S	Power Site
PX	Private Exchange
QCD	Quitclaim deed
Qs	Quicksilver
R	Range
R&PP	Recreation and Public Purpose
Rcpl	Reciprocal
Rd	Road
Re-cl	Reclassification
Rec Lse	Recreation Lease
Recl Wdl	Reclamation Withdrawal
Recon	Reconveyed
Reg	Regional
Rej	Rejected, rejection
Rel	Relinquished or Relinquishment
Res	Reservation or Reserve
Resc	Rescind, Rescinded
Rest	Restoration or Restored
Resvr	Reservoir
Rev	Revocation or Revoked
Rfg	Refuge
Rgr Sta	Ranger Station
RHE	Reclamation Homestead Entry
RI	Range Improvement
RIP	Records Improvement Project
Rmks	Remarks
RR	Railroad
RRG	Railroad Grant
RRIS	Railroad Indemnity Selection
RRLS	Railroad Leiu Selection
RS	Revised Statutes
Rstd	Restricted
Rvst	Revested
R/W	Right-of-Way

S	South
SAH	Soldier's Additional Homestead
SD	State Director
SDO	State Director's Order
SDW Wdl	Stock Driveway Withdrawal
SE	Southeast
sec.	Section
Sec of Agri	Secretary of Agriculture
Sec of the Int	Secretary of the Interior
Segr	Segregate or Segregated
Sel	Selection or Selected
SG	State Grant
SHC	Small Holding Line
Si	Silver
Sim	Simultaneous
SLUP	Special Lnad Use Permit
SO	Secretary's Order
Sod	Sodium
Spec Per	Special Permit
SR	Serial Register
SRHE	Stockraising Homestead Entry
SS	State Selection
ST	Small Tract
Stat	Statutes at Large
ST Cl	Small Tract Classification
ST Lse	Small Tract Lease
Sta	Station
Subdiv Und	Subdivision Undefined
Subj	Subject
Sul	Sulphur
Suppl	Supplemental
Sur	Survey or Surveyed
Sus	Suspended
SW	Southwest
SX	State Exchange

T or Tps	Township or Townships
TC	Timber Culture
Tel	Telephone
Teleg	Telegraph
Temp	Temporary
Term	Terminate, Termination
Tns	Townsite
Tr	Tract
Trans	Transmission
Trf	Transfer
Trf Juris	Transfer of Jurisdiction
Trfd	Transferred
Tri Sta	Triangulation Station
Trsp	Trespass
T/S	Timber and Stone
TUP	Temporary Use Permit

UA	Unit Agreement
Unapprop	Unappropriated
Undet	Undetermined
Undgd	Underground
US	United States
USS	United States Survey
Unsur	Unsurveyed
Ur	Uranium
USC	United States Code
USGS	United States Geological Survey
W	West
WAA	War Assets Administration
War Dept	War Department
WD	Warranty Deed
Wdl	Withdrawal
Wdn	Withdrawn
WP	Water Power
Wp Des	Water Power Designation
WR	Water Rights
WS	Watershed
Wt	Warrant
X	Exchange(d)

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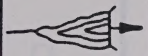
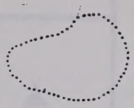
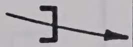
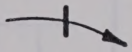
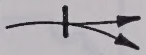
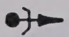
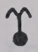
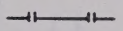
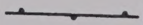
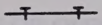
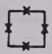
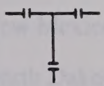
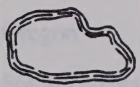
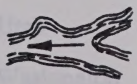
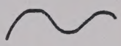
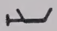
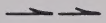
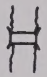
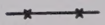
COMMONLY USED SYMBOLS

FEATURE	SYMBOL
Reservoir	
Land Treatment Area	
Check Dam	
Detention Dam	
Diversion Dam	
Improved Spring	
Well	●

FEATURE	SYMBOL
Artesian Well	
Power Transmission Line	—●– – –●—
Pipe Line Or Conduit	
Corridor (R/W's)	—— c ——
Road	▬▬▬
Trail Or Firebreak	-------
Telephone Line	

FEATURE	SYMBOL
Telegraph Line	
Shelter	
Windmill	
Study Plot	
Cathodic Protection Station	
Reservoir or Lake Water Line	
River or Large Stream	

FEATURE	SYMBOL
Important Stream	
Trough	
Ditch or Canal	
Bridge	
Storage Tank	
Fence	
Cattleguard	

For more symbols, see BLM Manual 1275 - Land Status Records

RESOURCE AID

6

STATE CODES FOR PATENT NUMBERING

STATE OR OFFICE	CODE
Alaska	50
Arizona	02
California	04
Colorado	05
Eastern States (for all states under its jurisdiction)	61
Idaho	11
Kansas	15
Montana	25
Nebraska	26
Nevada	27
New Mexico	30
North Dakota	33
Oklahoma	35
Oregon	36
South Dakota	40
Texas	42
Utah	43
Washington	46
Wyoming	49

Note: See Patent Preparation and Issuance Manual for Additional information.

RESOURCE AID

7

PUBLIC EDUCATION LAND GRANTS

When states were admitted to the union, they were granted from one to four sections of land in each township to support the public school system.

The following states were granted one section (16):

Alabama
Arkansas
Florida
Illinois
Indiana
Iowa
Louisiana
Michigan
Mississippi
Missouri
Ohio
Wisconsin

The following states were granted two sections (16 and 36):

California
Colorado
Idaho
Kansas
Minnesota
Montana
Nebraska
Nevada
North Dakota
Oklahoma
Oregon
South Dakota
Washington
Wyoming

Alaska was granted two sections (16 and 36) and Section 33 in part in the Tanana Valley.

Three states Arizona, New Mexico and Utah were granted four sections (2, 16, 32 and 36).

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